

PLAYBOY

FEB 1954
50¢

50%

— 10 —

PLAYBOY TOURS THE HOTTEST SPOTS IN PARIS



KIND WORDS

Having just thoroughly read your new publication **PLAYBOY**, I can not help but compliment you on your choice of material to entertain the male population.

My only concern is that I will not be able to find another edition next month. You see all my friends and relations got a "kick" out of it (wife included). Can you please write and inform how I can subscribe to **PLAYBOY**.

Walter H. Boden
Chicago, Illinois

P.S. I work in the printing line and was also greatly impressed with your layout of the magazine.

Thanks, Wally. In reply to this and other requests for information on subscriptions, see the end of this column.

May I congratulate you on your initial issue of **PLAYBOY** magazine. I subscribe to the two men's magazines you mentioned in your first issue and neither will ever compare to your magazine of entertainment for men. Needless to say, your photographs of the opposite sex gladly meet the approval of this twenty-seven year old business man. I am an Assistant Manager of the local J. C. Penney Co. store, and this magazine after hours of work is wonderful.

W. E. Beekly
Okmulgee, Okla.

My husband has read your first issue of **PLAYBOY** and enjoyed it very much. He has read many a magazine but this is the best.

He would like to have your magazine sent to him every month. Would you let him know how much a subscription to **PLAYBOY** costs?

Mrs. Leonard A. Pingel
Portland, Oregon

I'd like to congratulate you on a very fine and entertaining book.

PLAYBOY, I guarantee, is as fine as any material I've ever read, and having Marilyn Monroe as your first full color **PLAYBOY** Playmate was adding cream to the strawberries.

O. G. Ferrar
Collinsville, Illinois

dear playboy

Address **PLAYBOY**, 6052 S. Harper Ave., Chicago 37, Illinois

PLAYBOY is unquestionably the only real man's magazine ever to be published in these United States.

Mark Hamilton
Colorado Springs, Colo.

The other day I picked up one of the many magazines on the newsstands, and it happened to be PLAYBOY. After thumbing through it, I bought it. After reading it cover to cover, I've decided I would like to subscribe. Will you please send me your subscription rates.

Graham A. Bell
Fork Union, Va.

Just finished the wonderful first issue of PLAYBOY. At last a real man's magazine. I'm glad to find a magazine that gets down to brass tacks. It is about time.

How can one get a subscription to PLAYBOY? It would make me very happy to be a subscriber from the start.

Roy Esterwood, Jr.
Temple, Texas

Your first copy was a "smash hit!" It was just great! The color photo of Miss Monroe was just "out of this world!" Keep up the good work.

R. M. Raymer
Chicago, Illinois

COLLEGE DEPARTMENT

I have just finished my first issue of PLAYBOY and really enjoyed it. After showing it to the men on campus, it has taken the school over. I am quite interested in ordering a subscription. I am sure that others at Grinnell will want one also. Will you please send me some information on how I can subscribe to PLAYBOY.

Gary Kraus
Grinnell College
Grinnell, Iowa

Let me add my congratulations to the long list of them you are probably receiving. Yours is the best one of its kind out in my opinion. Throw together Argosy, Esquire, The New Yorker, and Sunbathing For Health,

condense the mixture, and the result would be PLAYBOY.

You cover everything worth covering and some that are worth covering twice. The full color PLAYBOY Playmate will probably be your strongest selling point. "The Men's Shop" adds necessary sophistication. Fine joke set-up. In the first issue, you had all good, well varied subjects. Keep it this way! I appreciate the cost of the type of material you use, but I think that for half-a-rock we deserve at least one slightly longer fiction story

James W. Fulk
Ball State Teachers College
Muncie, Indiana

Following the first issue, we added eight more pages — four more in color — giving us room for a longer fiction piece in each issue. In this issue, its "The Copper Beeches," one of Sherlock Holmes' strangest adventures.

I have just come in contact with your first issue of PLAYBOY and I would like to know if you sell subscriptions to the magazine.

I am a Junior here at college and am sure I could induce some of my classmates to subscribe to your magazine. Your first issue has been tossed around the campus and not all of it was intact when I received it. I would like to have a copy of your first issue and a subscription.

Charles Laser
Michigan Tech.
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

ARMED SERVICES DEPARTMENT

I am interested in obtaining a copy of Volume 1, Number 1 of PLAYBOY and also in obtaining information regarding the possibility of being a regular subscriber to PLAYBOY.

Ist. Lt. John Richardson
Fort Bragg, North Carolina

I recently purchased a copy of the first issue of PLAYBOY and thought I'd like to include something about this terrific magazine in a column I

write for the command newspaper ("The Flag").

Here is a copy of the portion of the column I have devoted to PLAYBOY:

"Latest magazine for men to hit the stands is called PLAYBOY. Priced at fifty cents, the mag dedicates itself to just what it implies — the playboy. Its main interest does not deal with anything like sports or hunting, but rather with the life and entertainment tastes of the modern playboy. Very entertaining reading for men from 18 to 80."

Dick Viola J03
U. S. Atlantic Fleet
Service Force
Norfolk, Virginia

DENTAL DEPARTMENT

Your new magazine PLAYBOY is excellent. But where can I get it in Chicago? I picked up a copy of your first issue by accident in Michigan City. Please advise me where I can obtain the magazine regularly.

Dr. Ernest B. Kupfer, DSS
Chicago, Illinois

Our biggest Chicago retailer is the Post Office News in the Loop, or you can subscribe and have PLAYBOY delivered to your door each month.

BOP DEPARTMENT

I find your magazine real great, crazy as crazy can get — crazy! I really rocked on the cartoons — they stoned me.

Richard I. Tjaden
Menlo Park, Calif.

Your letter stoned us, man!

SUBSCRIPTIONS

We've been overwhelmed by your reaction to the first issue of PLAYBOY — both its sale and your wonderful letters. The great majority of the letters we've been receiving have asked about subscriptions. You can receive three full years of PLAYBOY pleasure for \$13 — a \$5 savings from the regular single-copy price. A two year subscription to PLAYBOY is \$10; one year is \$6. Send check or money order to PLAYBOY, 6052 S. Harper, Chicago 37, Illinois.



ADDRESS ALL ORDERS TO THE MEN'S SHOP,
C/O PLAYBOY, 6052 S. HARPER AVENUE,
CHICAGO 37, ILLINOIS. SORRY, NO C.O.D.'S.

THE MEN'S SHOP



The famous Polaroid Land Camera — one of the truly exciting photographic developments of the last few years. It both takes and develops a picture in just one minute. A single setting adjusts both lens and shutter speed. Snap a picture, then pull the tab. A minute later you have a clear, life-like photograph. Priced at \$89.75.

A duo-speed blender by Waring. The married playboy can give it to his wife for the kitchen, then use it to mix fancy drinks and cocktails for himself. The gourmet can prepare soups, salads,

cheese spreads, desserts; it blends, chops, grinds, mixes, purees, pulverizes and liquifies. The container is Pyrex, with a 37½ Oz. capacity. The blender has two speeds and will clean itself in five seconds. UL approved. AC-DC \$44.50.



Deal yourself in on this automatic card shuffler. Just turn the crank. It shuffles up to three decks, quickly and easily, without bending or mutilating the cards. Does a faster and far more thorough job than you can do by hand. Only \$5.95.



A combination rotisserie, broiler and grill for the spare-time chef. A concealed motor turns the roasting spit or grill spit continuously; an automatic timer regulates operation. Gives meats a juicy goodness you can't get any other way. Grills and fries on top — tempting bacon and eggs, melted cheese sandwiches. Six broiling levels, from rare to well done. AC only. Additional grill spit for chops, steaks. Complete, \$69.95.



Handsome crafted cheese boards in mahogany, walnut, or avodire, with cane-wound brass handles. Top, 10x20,



\$13.50; center, 8½x15, \$10.00; bottom, 5x18, \$7.50. Please specify wood desired. Matching brass smorgasbord knife, with cane handle (left), \$5.00; brass cheese cutter (right), \$5.00.

Whether your average is 135 or 210 this clever drink-set for bowlers will make you forget the "railroads" you barely missed picking up the last time your gang got together.



The chrome plated bowling ball contains a syphon-server and six glasses. The glasses are set on a revolving base; the syphon in the center fills each one with the push of the plunger. Holds a full quart of your favorite beverage. \$14.95.

A portable, battery-operated shaver. A clean shave on hunting and fishing trips, on the way to the office, anywhere. The Norelco "Sportsman" operates for weeks on three 1½ volt flashlight batteries in the mirror case; or you can plug it into the dashboard lighter of your car. Compact and light, with a zippered pigskin case. \$29.95, less batteries.



The Cue Cart — a unique brazier for outdoor cooking. The giant cast-iron fire bowl has a draft regulator and removable grate.



The "wheel-barrow" frame is made of heavy duty 16-gauge steel tubing; with rubber grips on the handles. The rust-proof work table snaps on handles; can be removed and used as tray. Spit is adjustable to four positions; nickel-plated grill is hinged in center to permit refueling from either side. Just \$39.95.



This television-cocktail lounge robe is styled for comfortable evening leisure. In maroon pin-wale corduroy, with heavy satin trim and full satin lining. Available in sizes small, medium and large. Priced at \$19.95.





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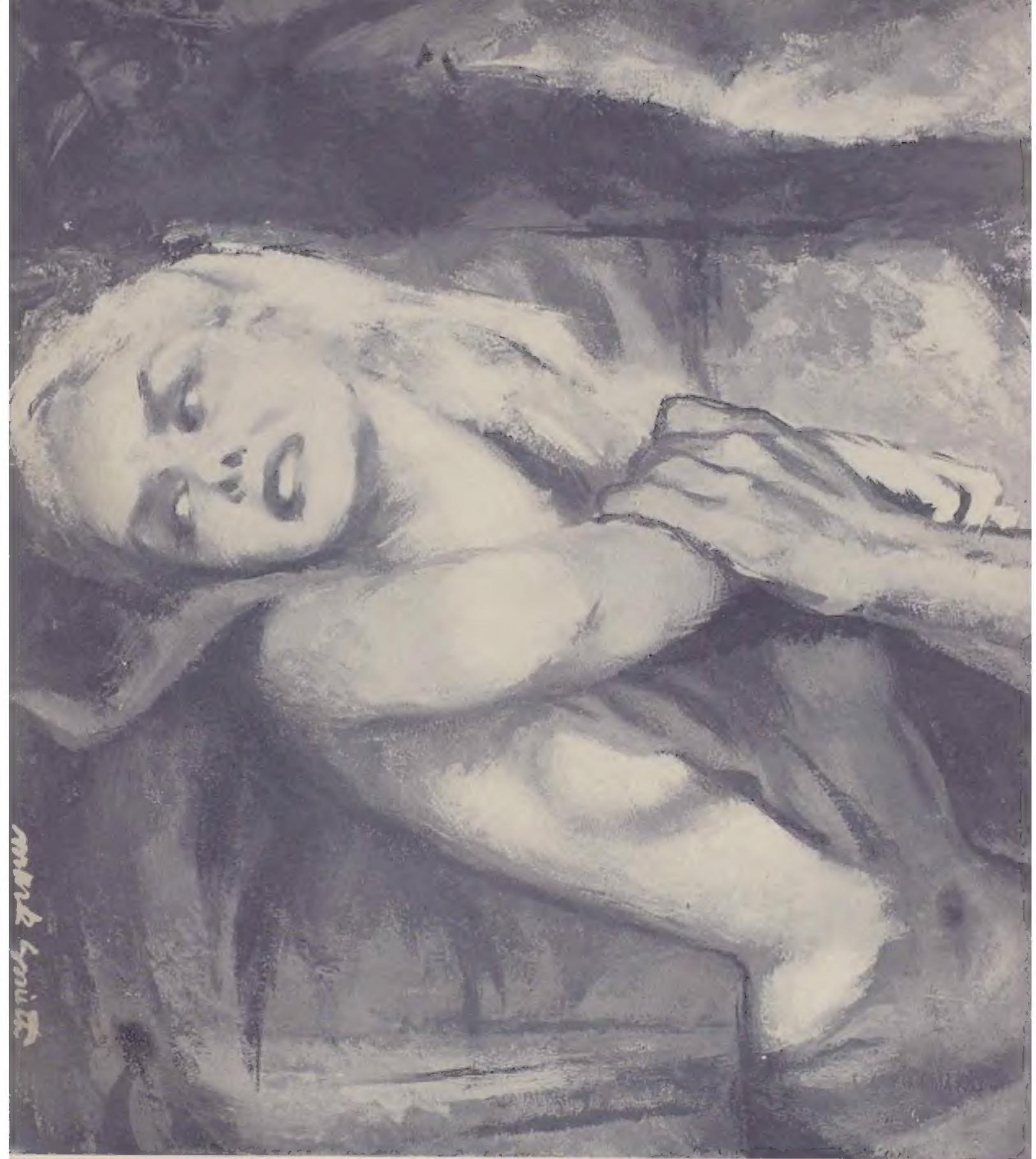
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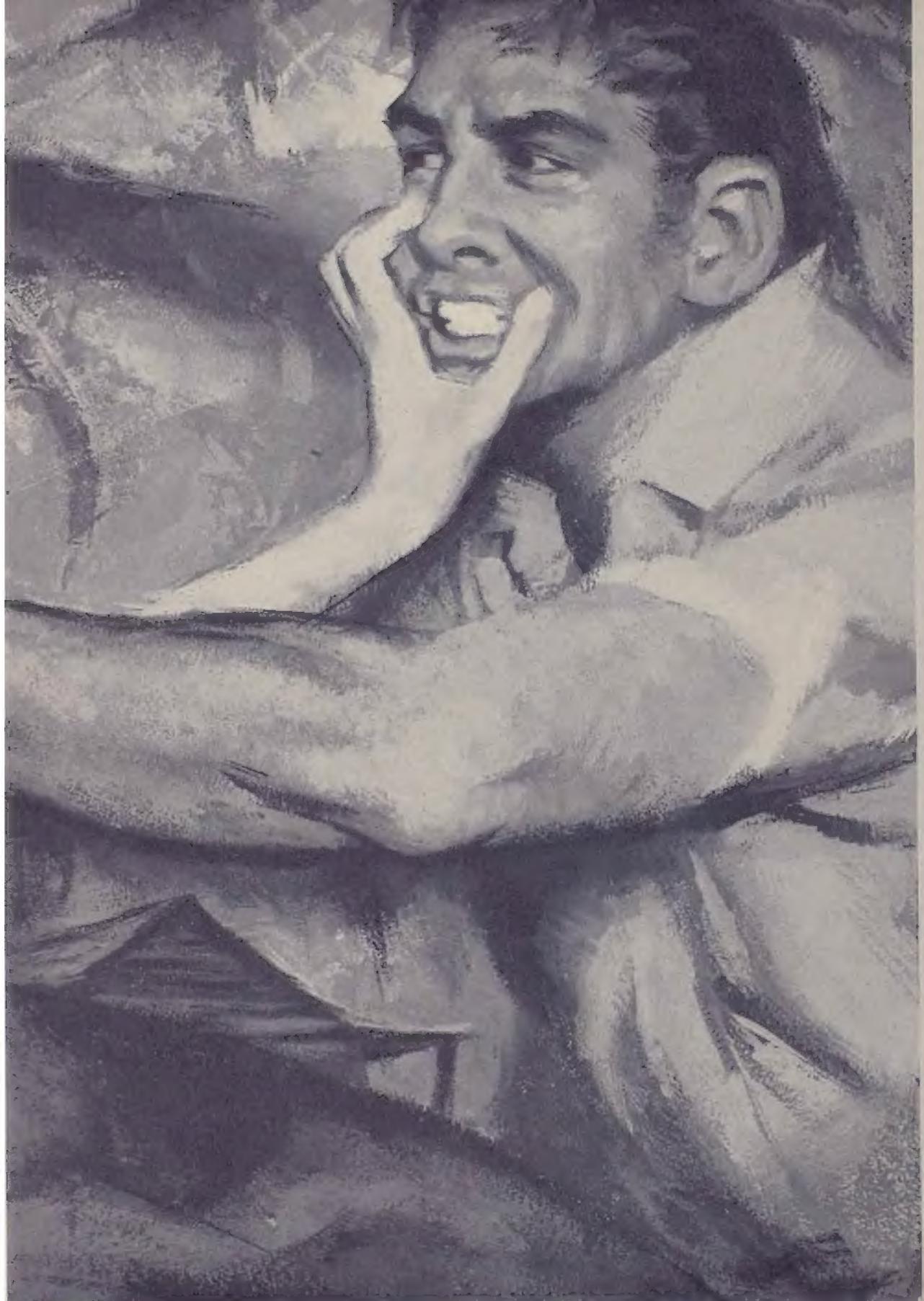
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mark sandita

printed from "Jackpot," copyright 1936 by Erskine Caldwell.

He caught her with both hands. Her dress tore like a sheet of newspaper.



FICTION

by **ERSKINE CALDWELL**



how much smaller the stream had become since the evening before.

Two months before, when he started hewing logs for a new cabin, the water rushed down the sandy course with enough force to carry small limbs and chunks of swamp-rotted logs. But since then, the winter rains had stopped and the swamp was once more a mire of soft, depthless mud, harmless-looking in its covering of tangled vegetation. The green ferns and running vines that grew through the spring and summer covered the mire-holes with the appearance of solid earth.

Davi had lived all his life on the edge of the swamp and he knew almost instinctively how dangerous it was.

After treading his way carefully over the chained logs to the other side of the swamp, Davi began running the rest of the way home. It was no more than a mile from the swamp to the old cabin, but the path was crooked and narrow as it wound through the thick growth of turpentine pines.

The moon was shining, and it was almost as bright as day in the woods. When he saw the clearing ahead, he ran faster.

The place was as still and quiet as the pine forest around it. There was not even a thin wisp of smoke coming from the chimney, and if he had not seen the place before, at night, he would have declared it was deserted.

Opening the front door noiselessly, Davi listened for a moment. Through the broken window-shutter, a faint ray of moonlight entered the dark room and fell across the foot of the bed. Closing the door behind him, he went silently to the middle of the room. From there he could see the outlines of the table, the chairs, and the bed. In the gloom everything looked as if it were covered with a foot-thick coating of dust.

Davi went to the woodbox and fumbled in the dark until he had found a pine lighter. He struck a match to it, the dripping pitch flared up instantly, then he tossed the blazing knot into the fireplace. When he turned around, the whole room was alive with yellow, flickering light. The table, chairs, and bed looked as bright as they were the day he bought them.

Jeanie sat up in bed nervously, the covers falling from her shoulders. Even before she could open her eyes, she was smiling at Davi. He crossed the room and watched her while she brushed the hair from her face.

"How long have you been asleep, Jeanie?" he asked her. She smiled at him, shaking her head.

"I guess I was a little late tonight, again," he said, appealingly. "The moon came up just at sundown, and I kept on working a while. I want to finish new cabin as quick as I can."

Jeanie threw aside the covers and slid to the side of the bed, touching the chilly floor with the tips of her toes.

"I kept the fire going in the stove as long as I could," she said, "but I was

so sleepy I couldn't stay awake any longer. I'm afraid your supper is cold now, Davi."

He stood where he was, a grin leaping from the corners of his mouth to all his face, and watched her stand up. When Jeanie took the first step towards the kitchen, Davi picked her up with a sweep of his arms and carried her back to bed. He held her at the side of the bed for a moment; then, hugging her so tightly she could hardly breathe, he kissed her on the mouth and dropped her on the bed. She caught her breath when she fell, and she felt as if she were dropping a dozen feet instead of only two.

"Don't bother about my supper," Davi said, laughing at her. "I'll eat it cold."

He left her and went to the kitchen and felt around in the darkness until he found the bread and potatoes. He brought back a cake of corn bread and a gourd-sized sweet potato and sat down on the side of the bed. Jeanie was wide awake by then.

"Is new cabin pretty near finished now, Davi?" she asked him. "I get awfully lonesome here all day long."

"It'll be ready to move into in about a week, or maybe less time than that," he told her, nodding slowly. "As soon as I can get the floor laid, we'll move in. The window-shutters can wait till after we move. It'll only take a couple of days to make those, anyway."

The pine lighter in the fireplace flickered, blazed, and died down. The knot was almost burned up.

Davi carried the potato skins back to the kitchen. When he got back, he undressed quickly and got into bed.

They lay together for a long time not saying anything. Jeanie moved closer to his side several times, and Davi buried his face in her hair.

When he was almost asleep, Jeanie whispered something.

"I can't hear you," he said, turning his head a little.

"That meddlesome old Bony King came here again, today," Jeanie said in a muffled whisper.

Davi turned over and raised himself on his elbow. He looked through the darkness into Jeanie's face.

"What did he want?"

"I told him I didn't want anything to do with him, no matter what he wanted."

"What did he say?"

"I didn't pay any attention to anything he said. I told him to go away and mind his own business, but he just laughed at me and stayed anyway."

Davi sank down upon the pillow, jerking his elbow from under him.

"Maybe Bony thinks I'm getting ready to move off and leave you," Davi said slowly, pausing between each word to draw his breath sharply. "Maybe he thinks I'm building new cabin over on the other side of the swamp for me and a new somebody."

Jeanie snuggled under his arm, worming her (continued on page 10)

PART way across the swamp, Davi Millard stopped and washed his hands and face in the clear water that trickled in a shallow stream under the log path. Every night when he stopped there on his way home from work, he could see



*"Oh — I couldn't accept that, Mr. Rainsford!
Why, we hardly know each other!"*

CABIN

(continued from page 8)

head until her face was pressed tightly against his neck.

"I don't care what he thinks," she said, shivering. "I don't want him coming here every day and sitting and looking at me all the afternoon. It upsets me so, I don't know what to do sometimes. Today, I felt like picking up a stick and whaling him for all he was worth."

Davi raised himself on both elbows and stared through the darkness of the room. Jeanie lay silently beside him. He did not say a word until Jeanie shivered again.

"The next time Bony comes here, tell him I said that if he don't quit bothering you, I'll tend to him all right, all right."

"One of the things he says every time he comes is, don't I feel sorry for myself because I married you instead of him?"

"What do you tell him to that, Jeanie?"

"I told him today that if I couldn't be married to you, I wouldn't be married to anybody else in the country."

Davi put his arms around her and drew her tightly to him. Jeanie whimpered for a while, and then she lay quiet and still. Davi could feel her relax while her breathing became lighter. He pressed his lips against her cheek, closing his eyes.

It was long after midnight when Davi woke up with a sudden consciousness. He was wide awake in a second, wondering what had made him wake up like that. He listened, raising his head from the pillow, but he could hear nothing. Outside the room, the pine barrens extended mile after mile in all directions. Nobody lived closer than twelve miles, and the only sound Davi ever heard there was the occasional muffled crash of a dead falling tree or the far-away whine of a bobcat. This time he could hear nothing at all.

After a while he lay down again, but he could not go back to sleep. He lay as still as he could so he would not wake Jeanie.

While he lay there, wondering how long it was until dawn, he began to wonder if Bony King had anything to do with his waking up in the middle of the night. The more he thought about it, the more he realized that Bony was the cause. He turned over and looked through the crack in the window-shutter at the moonlit pines at the edge of the clearing beyond the garden.

For the past year Bony King had been trying to make trouble for him, but Davi had always thought it would die down when Bony saw he could not make Jeanie leave and go to live with him. Davi remembered then that every day for almost three weeks Jeanie had told him of Bony's coming to old cabin while he was away building new cabin.

Bony was a turpentine worker who

lived in a shanty on the East Arm of Ogeechichobee Swamp. He had started out by telling Jeanie he was not going to stop trying to get her until she left Davi and came to live with him. Once when Davi was at the store near East Arm, Bony had told him the same thing. Davi had laughed it off then. But for the past few weeks, Bony had been coming to old cabin every day.

During the rest of the night Davi lay awake wondering what he could do about it. He could not move away from the swamp, because that was the only home he and Jeanie had.

Just before daybreak he got up and dressed without waking Jeanie. He went to the kitchen and ate some more of the cold corn bread and sweet potatoes. By then, the sun was coming up. He looked into the next room before leaving, and Jeanie was still asleep. He tiptoed out of the kitchen and started down the path for another day's work on new cabin, three miles away.

Jeanie did not wake up until almost an hour later. She turned over, first, to see if Davi was awake, and when she found he was gone, she leaped out of bed and ran into the kitchen. When she had reached the front yard, she was awake enough to know that Davi had left and gone to work.

After cooking her breakfast and cleaning the house, she went out into the garden. It was then only in the middle of the morning, and she began digging at the weeds with the blunt-bladed hoe. The vegetables she and Davi had planted nearly a month before were up and thriving in the damp earth and warm sunshine. She dug and chopped with the dull hoe until there was not a single weed left in the first row.

Just before noon, she looked up and saw Bony King sitting on a pine stump at the end of the garden. He did not say a word when she looked at him for the first time, and she had no way of knowing how long he had been sitting on the stump watching her. Jeanie's first thought was to drop the hoe and run into the kitchen. When she was just about to run, she happened to think that Bony would surely follow her now, no matter where she went. She decided quickly that the best thing to do was to stay where she was.

During the next half-hour she did not glance even once in Bony's direction. She knew he was still sitting on the stump, because she could see his shadow out of the corner of her eye, but she was determined not to look at him, if he stayed there all day.

Finally she could bear it no longer. Bony had been sitting there for the past hour or more, whittling on a stick and smiling at her. Jeanie dropped the hoe and stared him full in the face.

"What do you want here again today, Bony King?" she cried at him, stamping her feet and beating her fists against her hips.

He did not say a word. He only smiled more broadly at her.

"I wish you would keep away from here and let me and Davi alone," she said angrily. "We don't like you one bit!"

"Davi don't, but you do," Bony said, shifting his crossed legs. "Now, ain't that so, Jeanie?"

"Thats a whopping big old lie!" she cried. "You're just trying to make it hard for me because I married Davi, and wouldn't you!"

Bony brushed the shavings from his overalls.

"You ought to change over, Jeanie," he said. "Now's a pretty good time to do it, too. I've already got my new cabin built, and Davi hasn't."

"That's another of your whopping old lies," Jeanie said. "You even haven't started to build one yourself, and you know it."

"How do you know so much about what I do and what I don't do?" he said.

"Davi tells me."

"Davi didn't tell you the truth about that, because I'm starting on mine already."

Jeanie could not keep from answering him, even though she knew he was saying things like that just to make her talk to him.

"Davi's got ours pretty near finished, and you haven't even started on yours, Bony King."

Bony got up and crossed the garden. He came down the row and stopped at the end of her hoe handle.

"It won't be finished if Davi slips off the log path through the swamp, some night," Bony said, nodding his head at her. "It's pretty dangerous for a man to cross the swamp at night, anyway. If a cloud was to come up all of a quick one of these moonlight nights while a man was half-way through the swamp, he wouldn't be able to see the rest of the way, especially on that slippery log path. If he was in a hurry, and tried to follow the log path out, he might slip off into one of those mire-holes that's all covered over with pretty ferns and vines. I've seen it get so dark in the middle of the swamp that you couldn't even follow your hand in front of you."

Jeanie reached down to pick up the hoe, but Bony set his foot on the handle, and she could not lift it.

"That was no story I was trying to dress up for you," he said, shaking his head at her. "That's the truth."

"Davi will take care of himself," Jeanie said slowly.

"Not if he was to trip and fall off that chained-log path into a mire-hole on a pitch-black night," Bony said, swinging his head from side to side. "I've seen it happen before."

Jeanie closed her eyes for a moment, promising herself to make Davi stop staying at new cabin after dark.

"Some folks won't learn a lesson till it's too late," Bony told her.

He had already taken two or three steps toward (continued on page 42)

The SAGA O F FRANKIE & JOHNNY



When a youth I learned the song of "Frankie and Johnny" from a colored piano player, who was called "Professor" in a parlor house.

The parlor house was owned and run by a lady who was called Madam Helen Blazes. You may conclude that mine was a misspent youth, but the knowing of these ladies and the houses that they ran has enabled me to fashion these woodcuts from fond memories.

The engraving of these blocks has taken many hours and a strong right arm, but in doing them I have lived again a wild free existence in an Inter-Rocky Mountain settlement with my friends the whores, the pimps, the gamblers, the hop-heads and leutenant police, who used to know "The Mormon Kid."

BEAUTIFULLY ENGRAVED BY
JOHN HELD JR

I
 Come gather round me, old timers,
 Come gather round me, I say.
 I'll tell you the story of Frankie and Johnny
 Who loved their life away.
 For he was her man, and he done her wrong.

II

Frankie and Johnny were lovers.
 Oh, my God, how they could love.
 They swore to be true to each other,
 True as the stars above.
 For he was her man, and he done her wrong.

III

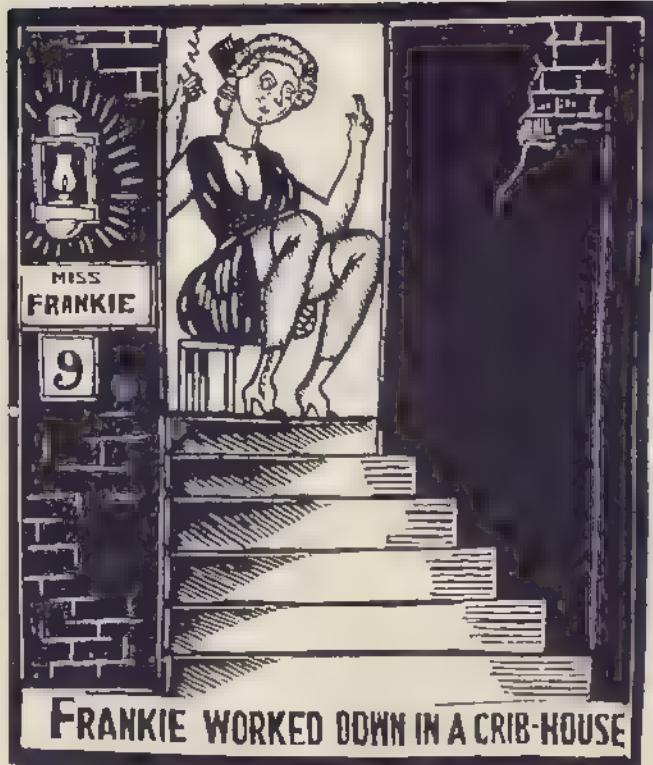
Frankie worked down in the crib house,
 Worked there without any drawers.
 She gave all her money to Johnny,
 Who spent it on parlor-house whores.
 For he was her man, and he done her wrong.

IV

Frankie and Johnny were lovers,
 Just like every one knows.
 Frankie gave her Johnny a hundred dollars
 To buy a new suit of clothes.
 For he was her man, and he done her wrong.

V

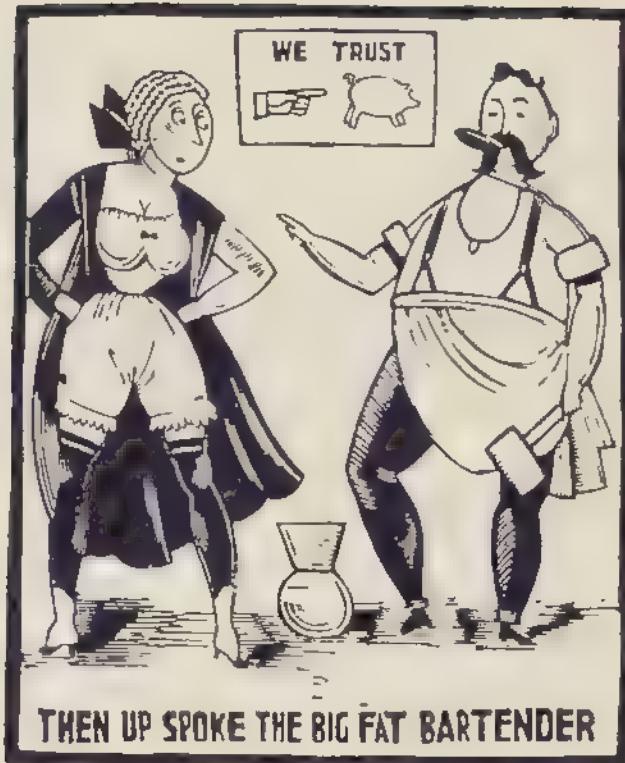
Frankie and Johnny went walking.
 Johnny in his brand new suit.
 "Oh, my gawd," said Frankie,
 "Don't my Johnny look cute?"
 For he was her man, and he done her wrong.



VI

Frankie went up to Ogden.
 She went on the morning train.
 She gave her Johnny a hundred dollars,
 To buy a watch and chain.
 For he was her man, and he done her wrong.





THEN UP SPOKE THE BIG FAT BARTENDER

VII

Frankie went down to the corner,
To get her a big glass of beer.
She said to the big fat bar-tender,
"Has my lovin' Johnny been here?
For he is my man, tho he does me wrong."

VIII

Then up spoke the big fat bar-tender.
Said, "Frankie, I'll tell you no lie.
Your Johnny was here just a minute ago,
With a blonde named Nelly Bly.
If he is your man, well he's doing you wrong."

IX

Frankie went down to the hock shop.
She bought her a big forty-four;
She aimed a shot at the ceiling,
And shot a hole in the floor.
For he was her man, and he was doin' her wrong.

X

Frankie went back to the corner.
This time it wasn't for fun.
Sewed up in her yellow kimono
Was a blue-barreled forty-four gun.
For he was her man, and he done her wrong.

XI

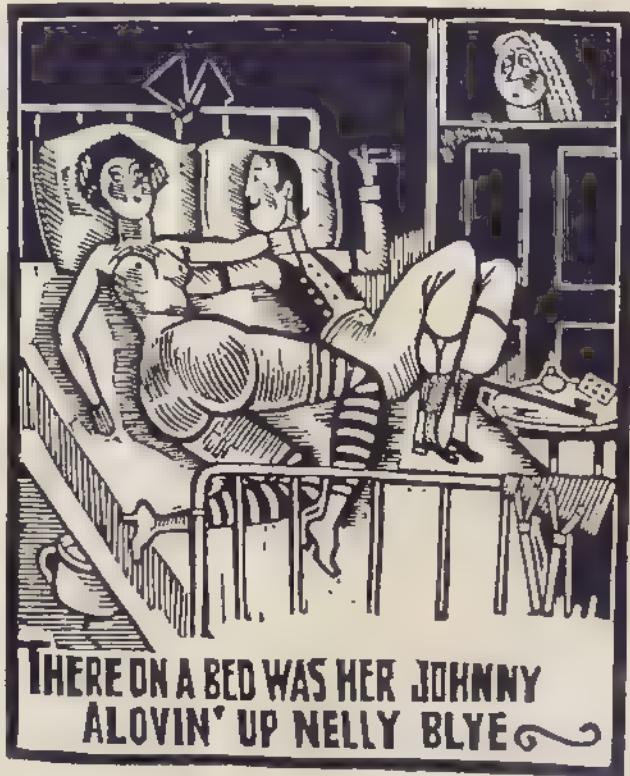
Frankie went up to the parlor-house,
She rang on the parlor-house bell.
"Get out of my way, all you pimps and chippies,
Or I'll blow you all to Hell.
For he is my man, and he's doin' me wrong."



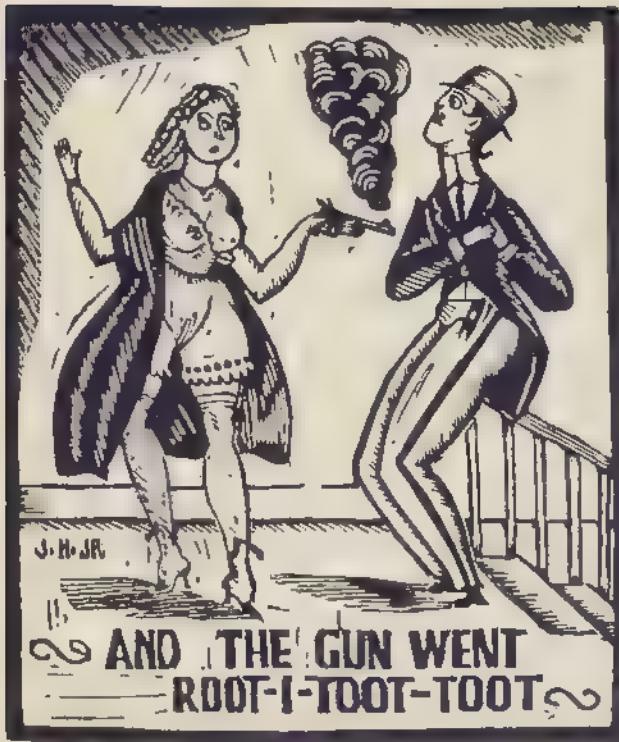
IN HER YELLOW KIMONO WAS A BLUE BARRELED FORTY FOUR GUN

XII

Frankie went up to the hop-joint,
She looked in the window so high.
There on a bed was her Johnny
Lavin' up Nelly Bly.
But he was her man, tho he'd done her wrong.



THERE ON A BED WAS HER JOHNNY ALOVIN' UP NELLY BLYE



XIII

AND THE GUN WENT
ROOT-I-TOOT-TOOT

Johnny ran down the back stairway
Crying, "Frankie, for God's sake, don't shoot!"
But Frankie unlimbered her big forty-four,
And the gun went root-i-toot-toot.
For he was her man, and he'd done her wrong.



XVIII

O LORD HAVE MERCY ON ME ~
I WISH I COULD TAKE HIS PLACE

The sheriff came around in the morning,
Said, "Frankie, it's all for the best."
He said, "Your pimp Johnny
Was nothin' but a God-damned pest.
For he was your man, and he done you wrong."

XIV

"Turn me over so gently.
Oh, turn me over so slow.
Turn me over to the right side,
So the bullet won't hurt me so.
For I was her man, and I done her wrong."

XV

Frankie knelt down at the coffin.
She looked down at Johnny's face.
She said, "God have mercy upon me,
I wish I could take his place.
For he was my man, tho he done me wrong."

XVI

"Call out your rubber-tired hearses,
Call out your rubber-tired hacks.
They're taking poor Johnny to the graveyard,
And they ain't going to bring him back.
For he was my man, and he done me wrong."

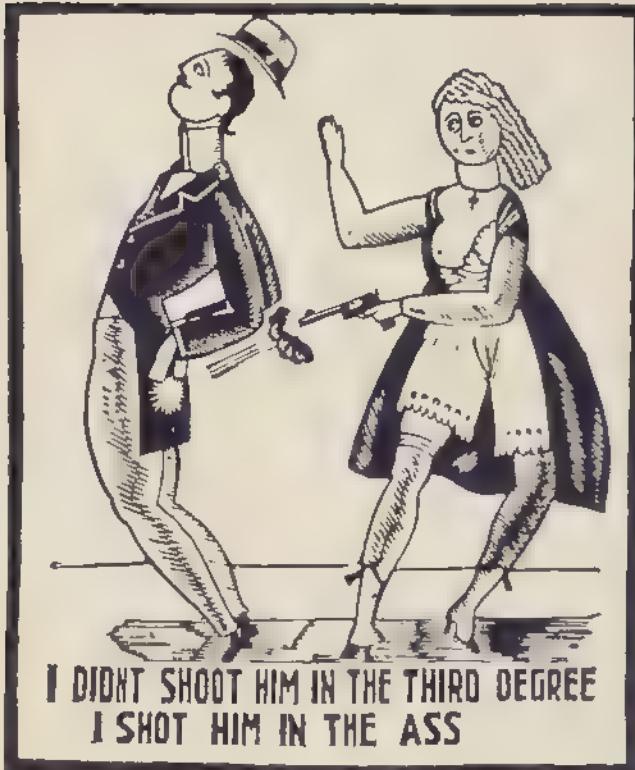
XVII

"Oh, bring on a thousand policemen,
Bring them around today.
Oh, lock me up in a dungeon,
And throw the keys away.
For he was my man, and he done me wrong."



XVII

LOCK ME IN THAT DUNGEON
AND THROW THE KEY AWAY



I DIDN'T SHOOT HIM IN THE THIRD DEGREE
I SHOT HIM IN THE ASS

XX

"I didn't shoot him in the first degree,
I didn't shoot him in the last.
I didn't shoot him in the third degree.
I shot him in the ass.
For he was my man, and he done me wrong."

XXI

The Judge, he said to the jury,
"It's plain as plain can be.
This woman shot her lover.
It's murder in the third degree.
For he was her man, and he done her wrong."



THE JUDGE SAID TO THE JURY
ITS PLAIN AS PLAIN CAN BE



THIS STORY ONLY GOES TO SHOW
YOU CAN TRUST NO GODDAMMED MEN

XXII

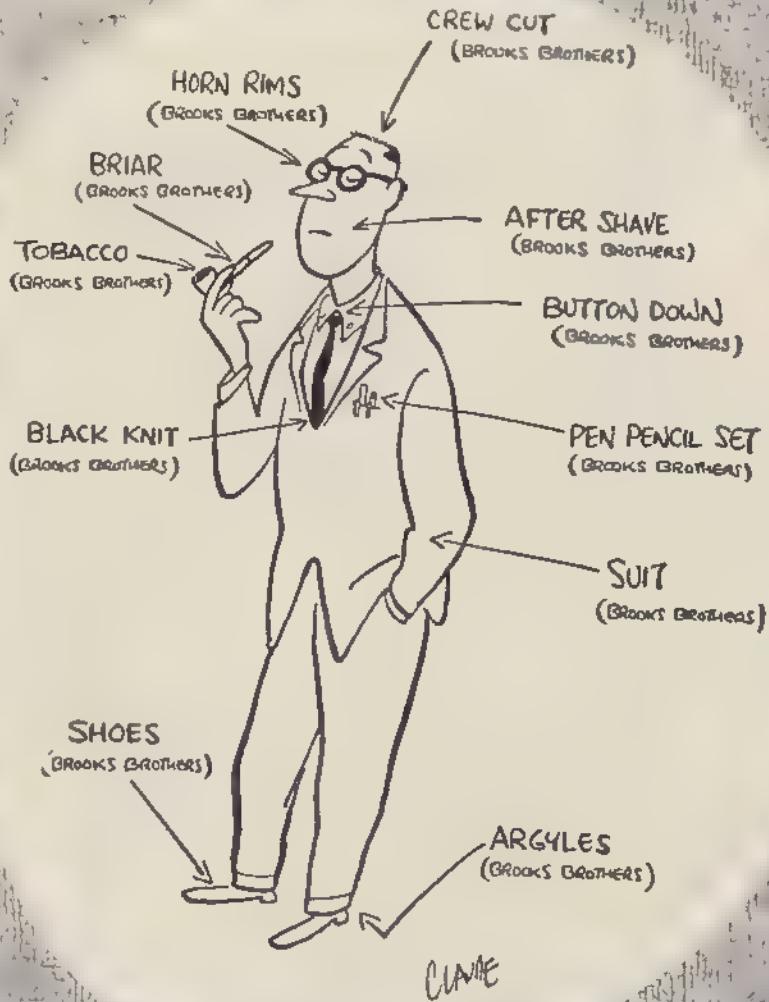
Frankie, she mounted the scaffold,
As calm as a young girl can be,
And turning her eyes to Heaven,
Said, "Sweet God, I'm coming to Thee.
For he was my man, and he done me wrong."

XXIII

This story has no moral.
This story has no end.
This story only goes to show
You can't trust no God-damned men.
For he was her man, and he done her wrong.

LOOK

WHAT BROOKS BROTHERS



In this drawing from Shepaerd Mead's book "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying," (Simon and Schuster) artist Claude illustrates the proper dress for men who expect to amount to something.

THE famous Madison Avenue, New York, outfitters to gentlemen and sartorial emporium *par excellence*, Brooks Brothers, with branches in Chicago, Boston, Los Angeles and San Francisco, and impassioned devotees from Bangor to Bombay, is once more in the news. It seems that "The Brooks Brothers Look" has broken out of the cracked leather-and-brass-tacked confines of the Yale, Harvard and

Princeton Clubs and is spreading like the oak blight to yonder hinterlands, lending its polished luster to — horrors — the lesser breeds. It's really about time the rest of the world got wise. It's a rotten shame that they've missed so much all these years. For there is nothing new about The Brooks Brothers Look; it has flourished like the flora and fauna in certain geographic areas of the United States for literally

By JULIEN DEDMAN

BURN MY ZOOT SUIT,
MOTHER. CONSERVATIVE
EASTERN DRESS IS A
MUST THIS SEASON.

hanimism and Shintoism in its fanatic fervor. It is a way of life. You are initiated into its ancient and honorable cult when you enter Hotchkiss, Andover, Exeter, Groton, or any other of the fashionable eastern prep schools, including dear old Pomfret. Your father takes you (as his father did before him) to Brooks Brothers, or to one of its multifarious imitators, and you are transformed — *presto chango* — into a "man who belongs." You emerge wearing a suit with no shoulder padding, a straight-hanging (no sitting through the waist, please) three-button coat with narrow, notched lapels, pleatless trousers narrowed through the knees to a neat eighteen inch cuff. For two bucks extra you can have the buttons removed from the fly and replaced by one of those new fangled zippers, although the salesman really won't approve. It is preferably a dark Oxford grey flannel, but any similar funeral tone will do. Cambridge grey was all the rage last year — a touch darker, you know. The *pièce de résistance* consists of a selection of white, button-down collar, Oxford weave shirts embellished by several silk repp English regimental striped ties. Shoes pose a problem. The Brooks Brothers Look demands old shoes of very good leather (preferably slightly cracked) and polished to a high sheen. New shoes are *déclassé*. The answer to this is to buy a new pair of shoes and wear them furtively until they are properly aged, or else buy them at a second-hand store. Thusly clad, you can enter any prep school you please and rest assured that nobody will find you different from anyone else. Like we said, it's a way of life.

Once this pattern is established it remains, unchanging, throughout prep school, college, marriage, divorce, remarriage, and death. At college (eastern, again) you don't make a fraternity unless you've conformed to the venerable BB formula. It has its advantages, for during rush period it's easy to detect "your type," the kind with whom you can "really get along." Naturally, he's wearing a Brooks Brothers suit.

In business, too, you know whom you can trust. Not that wiseacre with the padded shoulders and glaring chalk stripe who approaches you with that over-genuine, asinine smile. No, Timothy Groton is the guy you want to pitch pennies with. Timothy Groton is a decorous gentleman with a slightly pinched face and shoulders to match, *à la* Brooks Brothers. His iron grey eyes harmonize beautifully with his Oxford grey suit. His silk repp tie with regimental stripes (Fifth Royal Fusiliers, you quickly note) attests readily to his reliability. Timothy, by his charming superciliousness, his slightly British accent, and, above all, his impeccably austere dress, is a man

to be trusted. Timothy is most at ease as he rests his narrow-brimmed, high-crowned John Locke hat on your desk and politely, yet firmly, solicits your contribution to the *Poodle Obedience Club of Upper Montclair*. The clan spirit overwhelms you. How does one dare go against his own tartan? Timothy, strengthening the bonds of comrade, whips from his tattersall vest a subscription book which you sign without hesitation. It's a mere pledge of fifty clams. Brooks Brothers wins again, and you are duly enrolled as a patron of the *Poodle Obedience Club of . . . where was it?*

Brooks Brothers, through it all, sits dauntless and unperturbed on its traditional site at 44th Street and Madison Avenue, New York — the mother of them all, a citadel of conservatism, unmoved by the vagaries and vicissitudes of male fashion. In this fickle world of change, one can always count on Brooks Brothers to remain faithful to its style. It will go on *ad infinitum* clinging jealously, tenaciously, to its tried-and-true measurements without which one is certainly no gentleman. Too bad that this noble invention has no patent, that it must be dispersed promiscuously to the let-them-eat-cake segment of our populace.

Nightclub comedians, TV crooners, band leaders have dipped into the Ivy League Pandora's Box of fashion and emerged with crew cuts, horn rimmed glasses, and that BB Look. It used to be you could tell a Yale, Harvard, or Princeton grad four blocks down Madison Avenue. Now, you aren't sure. It could be the alto saxophonist of Guy Lombardo's band, or maybe the m.c. at the Copacabana.

Bookies, disc jockeys, even presidential candidates have felt the influence of conservative eastern dress. It has reached clear across the continent to once-radical Hollywood. Now a story conference at one of the major studios looks like a gathering of Yale alums at Mory's. Imagine Bob Hope in a banker's pin stripe starring in "Road To Upper Westchester County," with Bing Crosby, in British tweeds and crew cut, groaning *Boola Boola* in the background. Dorothy Lamour, of course, would be wearing a grey flannel sarong.

I'm mad! I've invested several hundred dollars in my Brooks Brothers wardrobe and I resent its intrusive, impertinent adoption by the barbaric hordes. How the hell can I preserve the aura of distinction that shrouds any wearer of a BB suit when every Tom, Dick, and Harry in America is wearing a shabby imitation.

Damn it, I'd planned on succeeding in business without really trying, myself!

generations. Without it, for instance, you are branded a Bolshevik in most eastern universities, an untouchable in Boston and New York societies, a plain damned fool in the financial salons of Wall Street. Without it you can't possibly "succeed in business without really trying." What, then, is it?

The Brooks Brothers Look is not merely a *look* — it's a religion. It exceeds Buddhism, Hinduism, Mo-



tales from the D E C A M E R O N

A new translation of one of the choicest stories from Boccaccio's bawdy classic.

THE 9th TALE OF THE 7th DAY

In Argos, a city of Achaia, there once lived a nobleman named Nicostratus. When he was nearing old age, fortune bestowed upon him a very young wife, a noble lady named Lydia, as high spirited as she was beautiful. Nicostratus, being a man of wealth, kept many servants, hounds and hawks, and spent much of his time hunting. Among his servants was a young man named Pyrrhus, handsome, well bred, and skilled in all that he was required to do.

Now it came to pass that the lady Lydia fell in love with this young man, and day and night she could think of nothing else. Pyrrhus, however, either failed to recognize or did not want the lady's affection, for he gave no indication that he cared for her, and this made the lady very unhappy. At last, determined that he should know of her feelings, the lady summoned a chamberwoman named Lusca, in whom she had a great deal of confidence.

"Lusca," she said, "the many favors I have done for you should make you both faithful and obedient. Make certain, therefore, that the message I give you reaches no one but he for whom it is intended.

"As you see, I am a young woman, attractive in both face and figure, and filled with the same desires as others of my sex. My husband, however, is many years my elder, and gives me little of that which a young and spirited woman most enjoys. Fortune has been most unkind in giving me so old

a spouse, but I refuse to also be my own enemy by not finding other paths to pleasure. I have selected, therefore, after much consideration, the young servant Pyrrhus as most deserving and capable of supplying my wants. Indeed, dear Lusca, I so yearn for his embraces that I am never happy except when I see or am thinking about him. And if I do not hold him near to me soon, I believe that I shall die.

"Therefore, dear Lusca, if you value my life, make known my love to him in whatever way you think best, and beg him to come to me when you give him the sign."

The chamberwoman agreed and when the time seemed right, she gave her lady's message to the young servant. Pyrrhus was greatly surprised, as he had never suspected Lydia's feelings for him, and he feared that the lady might have sent the message to test his fidelity. Therefore, he answered:

"Lusca, I, myself, am very fond of my mistress and it would please me greatly to serve her in this way. But, on the other hand, I know my lord to be a wise and careful man who has full control of all his affairs. I'm afraid that Lydia may be doing this at the request of her husband as a test. If, however, she will do three things to reassure me, then her slightest wish shall be my command. The three proofs I desire are these: first, she must kill Nicostratus' favorite falcon before his eyes; second, she must send me a lock of Nicostratus' beard; third, she must send me one of his best

teeth. If she will do these things, I will know that she truly loves me and I shall love her in return."

These requests seemed difficult to Lusca and to the lady as well. But love made Lydia determine to attempt them, so she sent Pyrrhus word that she would do what was required of her, and soon. Moreover, she added, whereas Pyrrhus believed Nicostratus to be a wise man, she would prove him a fool by lying with Pyrrhus in his presence and then making him believe it had not happened.

Pyrrhus, therefore, waited with much anticipation to see what the lady would do.

The next week Nicostratus gave a large dinner for certain gentlemen friends. When the tables had been cleared, Madam Lydia came from her chamber in a handsome, green velvet robe. She entered the room where they were assembled and, in the presence of Pyrrhus, Nicostratus, and the rest, went to the perch where her husband's favorite hawk sat, took up the bird as though to place it on her hand, and then holding it by the jesses, dashed it against the wall and killed it.

"Wife, what have you done?" Nicostratus exclaimed.

"A thing I have wished to do for many months," she said, and then turning to the gentlemen who had dined there, she explained, "Gentlemen, you must know that this bird has deprived me of much of the time men usually give to ladies' pleasure, for as soon as dawn appears, Nicostratus is up and out on horseback with this falcon on his wrist, to watch it fly over the neighboring plains. (continued on page 32)

"Vile woman!" cried the husband. "What are you doing?"





TO THE man who loves art for its own sake," remarked Sherlock Holmes, tossing aside the advertisement sheet of the *Daily Telegraph*, "it is frequently in its least important and lowliest manifestations that the keenest pleasure is to be derived. It is pleasant to me to observe, Watson, that you have so far grasped this truth that in these little records of our cases which you have been good enough to draw up, and, I am bound to say, occasionally to embellish, you have given prominence not so much to the many *causes célèbres* and sensational trials in which I have figured but rather to those incidents which may have been trivial in themselves, but which have given room for those faculties of deduction and of logical synthesis which I have made my special province."

"And yet," said I, smiling, "I cannot quite hold myself absolved from the charge of sensationalism which has been urged against my records."

"You have erred, perhaps," he observed, taking up a glowing cinder with the tongs and lighting with it the long cherry-wood pipe which was wont to replace his clay when he was in a disputatious rather than a meditative mood—"you have erred perhaps in attempting to put colour and life into each of your statements instead of confining yourself to the task of placing upon record that severe reasoning from cause to effect which is really the only notable feature about the thing."

"It seems to me that I have done you full justice in the matter," I remarked with some coldness, for I was repelled by the egotism which I had more than once observed to be a strong factor in my friend's singular character.

"No, it is no (*continued on page 24*)

"My God!" he cried. "Someone has loosed the dog. It's not been fed for

The Adventure of the Copper Beeches

By SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE



What strange secret

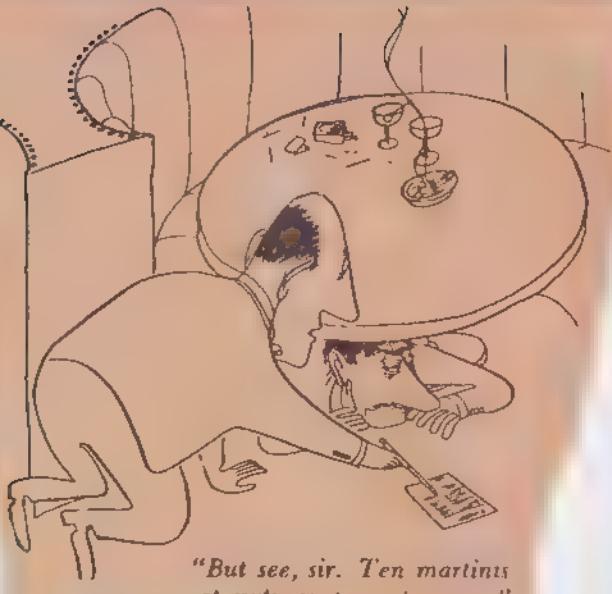
I lay behind the bolted door

in the deserted wing of the old house?

Perhaps Sherlock Holmes

could supply the answer.

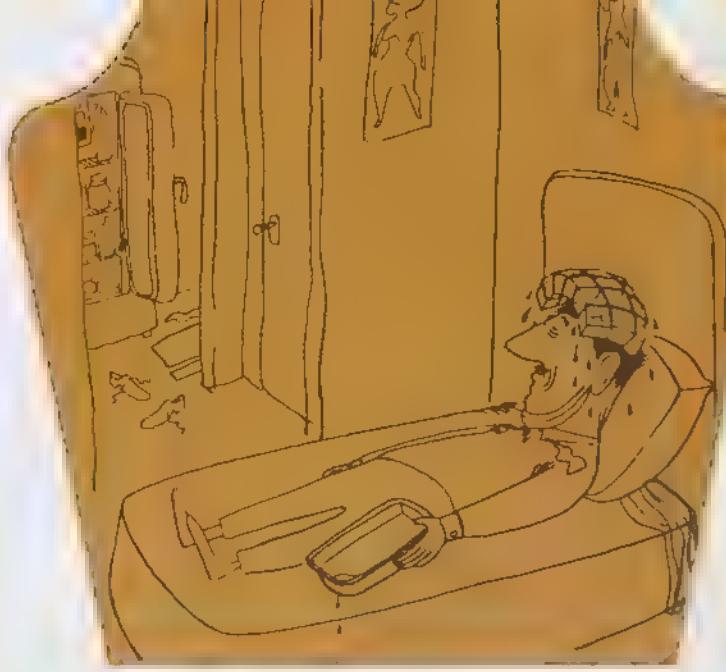
two days."



Reproduced from "Bottle Fatigue" by Virgil Partch, with permission
of the author, Little, Brown & Co. and Duell, Sloan & Pearce.



"On second thought, I will have that water chaser."



LOOK OUT—The Vipper is on the loose again! In the first issue of PLAYBOY, Partch dissected sex and left bodies strewn all over our office. When we found our wastebaskets, file cabinets, and desk drawers filled with empty bottles the other morning, we knew Vip was off on an extensive study of man's second best friend—alcohol. The Virgil One threw himself into the research for this report with his usual thorough-going enthusiasm, so if some of the drawings seem a little wild even for Vip, it's because he was half-crocked through the whole damn thing.



VIP ON LIKKER

Copper Beeches (continued from page 21)

selfishness or conceit," said he, answering, as was his wont, my thoughts rather than my words. "If I claim full justice for my art, it is because it is an impersonal thing—a thing beyond myself. Crime is common. Logic is rare. Therefore it is upon the logic rather than upon the crime that you should dwell. You have degraded what should have been a course of lectures into a series of tales."

It was a cold morning of the early spring, and we sat after breakfast on either side of a cheery fire in the old room at Baker Street. A thick fog rolled down between the lines of dun-coloured houses, and the opposing windows loomed like dark, shapeless blurs through the heavy yellow wreaths. Our gas was lit and shone on the white cloth and glimmer of china and metal, for the table had not been cleared yet. Sherlock Holmes had been silent all the morning, dipping continuously into the advertisement columns of a succession of papers until at last, having apparently given up his search, he had emerged in no very sweet temper to lecture me upon my literary shortcomings.

"At the same time," he remarked after a pause, during which he had sat puffing at his long pipe and gazing down into the fire, "you can hardly be open to a charge of sensationalism, for out of these cases which you have been so kind as to interest yourself in, a fair proportion do not treat of crime, in its legal sense, at all. The small matter in which I endeavoured to help the King of Bohemia, the singular experience of Miss Mary Sutherland, the problem connected with the man with the twisted lip, and the incident of the noble bachelor, were all matters which are outside the pale of the law. But in avoiding the sensational, I fear that you may have bordered on the trivial."

"The end may have been so," I answered, "but the methods I hold to have been novel and of interest."

"Pshaw, my dear fellow, what do the public, the great unobservant public, who could hardly tell a weaver by his tooth or a compositor by his left thumb, care about the finer shades of analysis and deduction! But, indeed, if you are trivial, I cannot blame you, for the days of the great cases are past. Man, or at least criminal man, has lost all enterprise and originality. As to my own little practice, it seems to be degenerating into an agency for recovering lost lead pencils and giving advice to young ladies from boarding-schools. I think that I have touched bottom at last, however. This note I had this morning marks my zero-point, I fancy. Read it!" He tossed a crumpled letter across to me.

It was dated from Montague Place upon the preceding evening, and ran thus:

DEAR MR. HOLMES:

I am : anxious to consult

you as to whether I should or should not accept a situation which has been offered to me as governess. I shall call at half-past ten to-morrow if I do not inconvenience you.

*Yours faithfully,
VIOLET HUNTER*

"Do you know the young lady?" I asked.

"Not I."

"It is half-past ten now."

"Yes, and I have no doubt that is her ring."

"It may turn out to be of more interest than you think. You remember that the affair of the blue carbuncle, which appeared to be a mere whim at first, developed into a serious investigation. It may be so in this case, also."

"Well, let us hope so. But our doubts will very soon be solved, for here, unless I am much mistaken, is the person in question."

As he spoke the door opened and a young lady entered the room. She was plainly but neatly dressed, with a bright, quick face, freckled like a plover's egg, and with the brisk manner of a woman who has had her own way to make in the world.

"You will excuse my troubling you, I am sure," said she, as my companion rose to greet her, "but I have had a very strange experience, and as I have no parents or relations of any sort from whom I could ask advice, I thought that perhaps you would be kind enough to tell me what I should do."

"Pray take a seat, Miss Hunter. I shall be happy to do anything that I can to serve you."

I could see that Holmes was favourably impressed by the manner and speech of his new client. He looked her over in his searching fashion, and then composed himself, with his lids drooping and his finger-tips together, to listen to her story.

"I have been a governess for five years," said she, "in the family of Colonel Spence Munro, but two months ago the colonel received an appointment at Halifax, in Nova Scotia, and took his children over to America with him, so that I found myself without a situation. I advertised, and I answered advertisements, but without success. At last the little money which I had saved began to run short, and I was at my wit's end as to what I should do."

"There is a well-known agency for governesses in the West End called Westaway's, and there I used to call about once a week in order to see whether anything had turned up which might suit me. Westaway was the name of the founder of the business, but it is really managed by Miss Stoper. She sits in her own little office, and the ladies who are seeking employment wait in an anteroom, and are then shown in

one by one, when she consults her ledgers and sees whether she has anything which would suit them.

"Well, when I called last week I was shown into the little office as usual, but I found that Miss Stoper was not alone. A prodigiously stout man with a very smiling face and a great heavy chin which rolled down in fold upon fold over his throat sat at her elbow with a pair of glasses on his nose, looking very earnestly at the ladies who entered. As I came in he gave quite a jump in his chair and turned quickly to Miss Stoper.

"That will do," said he; "I could not ask for anything better. Capital! capital?" He seemed quite enthusiastic and rubbed his hands together in the most genial fashion. He was such a comfortable-looking man that it was quite a pleasure to look at him.

"You are looking for a situation, miss?" he asked.

"Yes, sir."

"As governess?"

"Yes, sir."

"And what salary do you ask?"

"I had 4 pounds in my last place with Colonel Spence Munro.

"Oh, tut, tut! sweating—rank sweating" he cried, throwing his fat hands out into the air like a man who is in a boiling passion. "How could anyone offer so pitiful a sum to a lady with such attractions and accomplishments?"

"My accomplishments, sir, may be less than you imagine," I said. "A little French, a little German, music, and drawing—"

"Tut, tut!" he cried. "This is all quite beside the question. The point is, have you or have you not the bearing and deportment of a lady? There it is in a nutshell. If you have not, you are not fitted for the rearing of a child who may some day play a considerable part in the history of the country. But if you have, why, then, how could any gentleman ask you to condescend to accept anything under the three figures? Your salary with me, madam, would commence at 100 pounds a year."

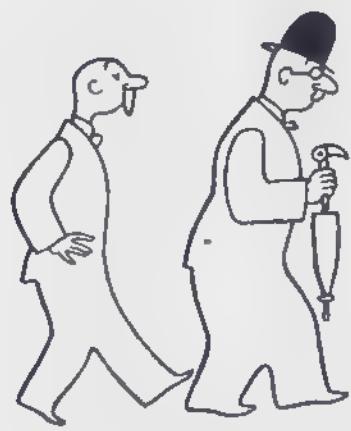
"You may imagine, Mr. Holmes, that to me, destitute as I was, such an offer seemed almost too good to be true. The gentleman, however, seeing perhaps the look of incredulity upon my face, opened a pocketbook and took out a note.

"It is also my custom," said he smiling in the most pleasant fashion until his eyes were just two little shining slits amid the white creases of his face, "to advance to my young ladies half their salary beforehand, so that they may meet any little expenses of their journey and their wardrobe."

"It seemed to me that I had never met so fascinating and so thoughtful a man. As I was already in debt to my tradesmen, the advance was a great convenience, and yet there was something unnatural about the whole transaction which (continued on page 35)



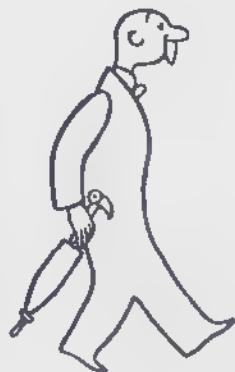
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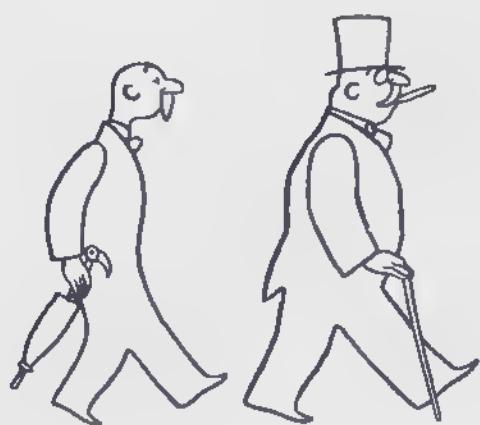
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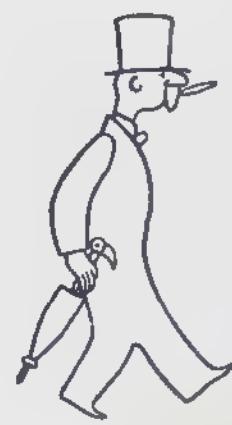
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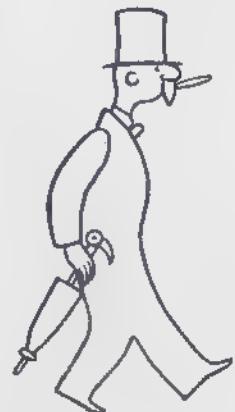
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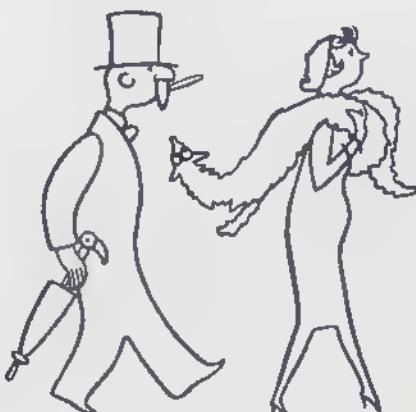
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6



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8



9

GARDNER
REA

THE KLEPTOMANIAC

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH

MISS FEBRUARY



My Gun

Is The Jury

By Julien Dedman

meet reginald sledge, the sadistic, sexy sleuth that makes spillane's mike hammer seem like little lord fauntleroy.

I pressed down on the accelerator and a hail of lead spit from the front of my custom-built Maxwell. I was in a hurry, and I didn't want any lousy pedestrians standing in my way. I knew if any simple-minded cop tried slipping me a traffic ticket, Fats Lambo, my pal at the D. A.'s office, would shove it down his regulation-conscious throat. And I was mad. Damn mad! The dirty killer who'd fed arsenic to my pet parakeet was going to get it in the gut. I was going to feed him .45 dumducks till he sank through the pavement without a bubble.

I gave the squeeze to a Yellow Cab and skidded to a halt at a stoplight. I was thankful to the garage mechanic who'd stripped down a new Jaguar and put its motor under the hood of my Maxwell. It was good for laughs.

I sat there waiting for the light to change, playing Russian Roulette with my snub-nosed Smith and Wesson just to while away the time. The cabbie I'd squeezed onto the curb started calling me dirty names. I didn't like that. I stepped out of my heap and yanked open his door. I started from the pavement, plunged my fist into his fat belly and played *Kitten on the Keys* with his spinal column. He gave a moan that was sheer music. I rammed my fist into his mouth and his teeth clattered on the floor like loaded dice. He asked me why I did that. My reply was a quick kick into his end zone that left him spewing like a punctured football. I yanked one of his arms from its socket and clubbed him over the head with it. He started to protest, so I delivered five staccato eye pokes with the precision of a hopped-up pneumatic drill.

I wouldn't have been so easy on him if the light hadn't changed. Charitably, I slammed the door on his jugular vein,

stepped back into my cleverly disguised Jaguar and drove off laughing like hell. Like I said, I was mad.

My office is right off Broadway, so I pulled my heap into the bus stop I'd had specially painted for me. No buses run on that street. It's one of those ingenious ideas of mine that keeps me three steps ahead of the next guy. I got out of my heap and walked to my office building three steps ahead of the next guy. Jose, the elevator man, greeted me with an ingratiating grin.

"Good t' see ya back, Mr. Sledge," Jose said. "Ain't seen ya around fer three days."

"Good to be back, Jose," I countered. Jose is a good Joe.

He ran me up to my floor, and on the way out of the elevator, I gave him a good-natured slap on the shoulder that left him laid out on the floor with a busted clavicle.

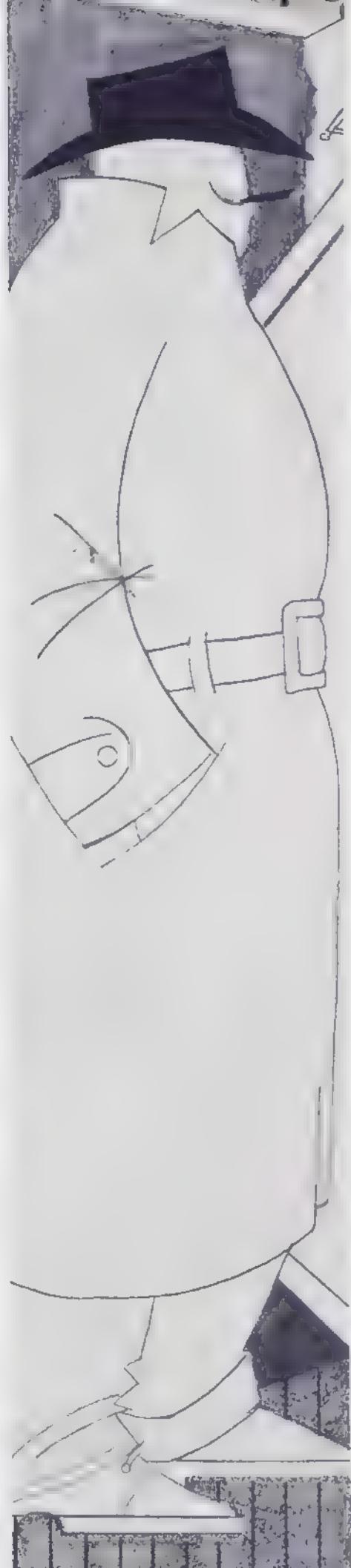
"Thanks a lot, Mr. Sledge," he mumbled. "You're a swell fella." He lay there looking up at me with that same goddamned ingratiating grin.

"Don't mention it, Jose," I called back throatily. I've always been a sucker for the little guy.

I've been in the gumshoe racket long enough to mistrust doors. You never can tell but what some cheap hood is standing behind one ready to blow out your esophagus. So I climbed through the transom and jackknifed down into the office, lacerating my forehead in the process.

"Well, Reginald Sledge—it's about time you're getting back!"

The voice sent a Beethoven symphony caroming up and down my spine—Beethoven's Fifth in C Minor it was. I could feel the hair on the nape of my neck tingling like a Vitalis shampoo. I picked myself up off the floor. Elmira, my devoted secretary, was standing





there in a low-cut kimono. Her breasts threatened to tear through the cloth at any moment and fall gingerly to the floor. Falsies. She tried to look mad, but I knew she had a secret passion for me.

"You two-bit shamus!" she growled. "I ain't been paid for two months and you go blowing your wad around like an uptown snow peddler. Why you no good, phony son-of-a-b . . ."

I grabbed her by the wrists and drew her so close we were playing *footsie*, *kneesie*, and *ribsie* simultaneously. Her pulse was pounding faster than a kettle drummer with D. T.'s. I ground my lips into hers. She squealed ecstatically and fell limp into the chair.

"I'm yours, all yours!" she gasped.

"Nuts!" I said.

She passed out moaning on the floor. That's how I affect dames. Treat 'em mean and they love it.

I went over to the filing cabinet and pulled out my file on well-known parakeet killers. Any rat that would kill a parakeet deserved rubbing out in the nastiest way possible. I pulled out my file on Nastiest Ways Possible. I was still plenty burned up. I'm a mean guy.

The first folder I opened contained a note from Fats Lambo, my pal at the D. A.'s office. *You're getting warm, Reggie*, it read. I had to grin. I hated to. But I had to grin. Fats always knew what I was up to. But no flat-foot was going to stand in my way this time. Not even the D. A. himself. He'd have had my badge long ago if I hadn't caught him running a floating scrabble game in what was supposed to be a legitimate bookie joint.

I had dozens of parakeet killers on file. But no clues. I decided to call on Fats Lambo, my pal at the D. A.'s office.

Fats was mixing up a batch of *Pousse Cafes* when I walked in. He gave me a fish eye as I pocketed six of his Panetelos, bolted down four *Pousse Cafes* and poured out three fingers of bourbon for a chaser.

"Reggie," he said, "you're headed for

mad.

Fats picked up a scissors from the desk and cut the tie that was strangling him.

"Now calm down, Reggie," he pleaded. "I know you're my friend. I haven't forgotten that box of Wheaties you sent me last Christmas. Now look, don't mention it to a soul, but the D. A.'s got a tip that he thinks might lead to the killer. I can't tell ya what it is, but . . ."

He reached into his pocket and brought out some cheese straws. Deftly, he arranged them into letters on his desk. I leaned over and saw that they spelled out a name—a girl's name.

"Thanks, Fats," I said, winking. "Thanks a lot!"

I blew the D. A.'s office, but not before catching the ardent stare of Fats' secretary. It said, unmistakably, *I am mad for you, Reginald Sledge!*

Sharlene dePlush was the name Fats had spelled out for me with the straws. The phone book told me that Sharlene dePlush lived in an apartment on Park Avenue. Instinct told me that I'd better pack a rod. I had a bazooka sewn into my coat to resemble a displaced shoulder blade. When I got to her apartment, a bright boy running the elevator asked me my business. He smartened up after I fed him a knuckle sandwich and a mouthful of bloody Chiclets. We cruised up to the penthouse with me tapping out the directions on his skull.

The dePlush apartment opened readily after I pumped five slugs into the door and kicked it off its hinges. What I saw inside was a vision of loveliness that sent blood rushing to my head. I quickly applied a tourniquet to prolong the ecstasy of the moment. I gave her a good once-over—then I gave her a twice-over, just to make sure I hadn't missed anything. This broad was real class. She was wrapped in an ermine-trimmed negligee of sheerest silk. Her hair cascaded off her shoulders and lay in soft ringlets on the floor, harmonizing beautifully with the carpet. Her

I kicked the door off its hinges.

trouble. Big trouble! Every newspaper in town is headlining this parakeet killing. The pressure's on the D. A. from the Mayor's office, and the Anti-Cruelty To Parakeets Society is raising holy hell. Now you're messing in the act—threatening to show the D. A. up, threatening to make a fool of him, like you always do. The D. A. don't like it. He's sore. Plenty sore!"

I grabbed Fats by his Countess Mar tie

"Listen, slob," I snarled, "when I get through with the guy that killed off that poor little parakeet, you'll have to sop him up with a blotter to prefer charges. Vengeance will be mine. Mine!" A faint demoniacal growl rumbled from my throat. Jeez, I was

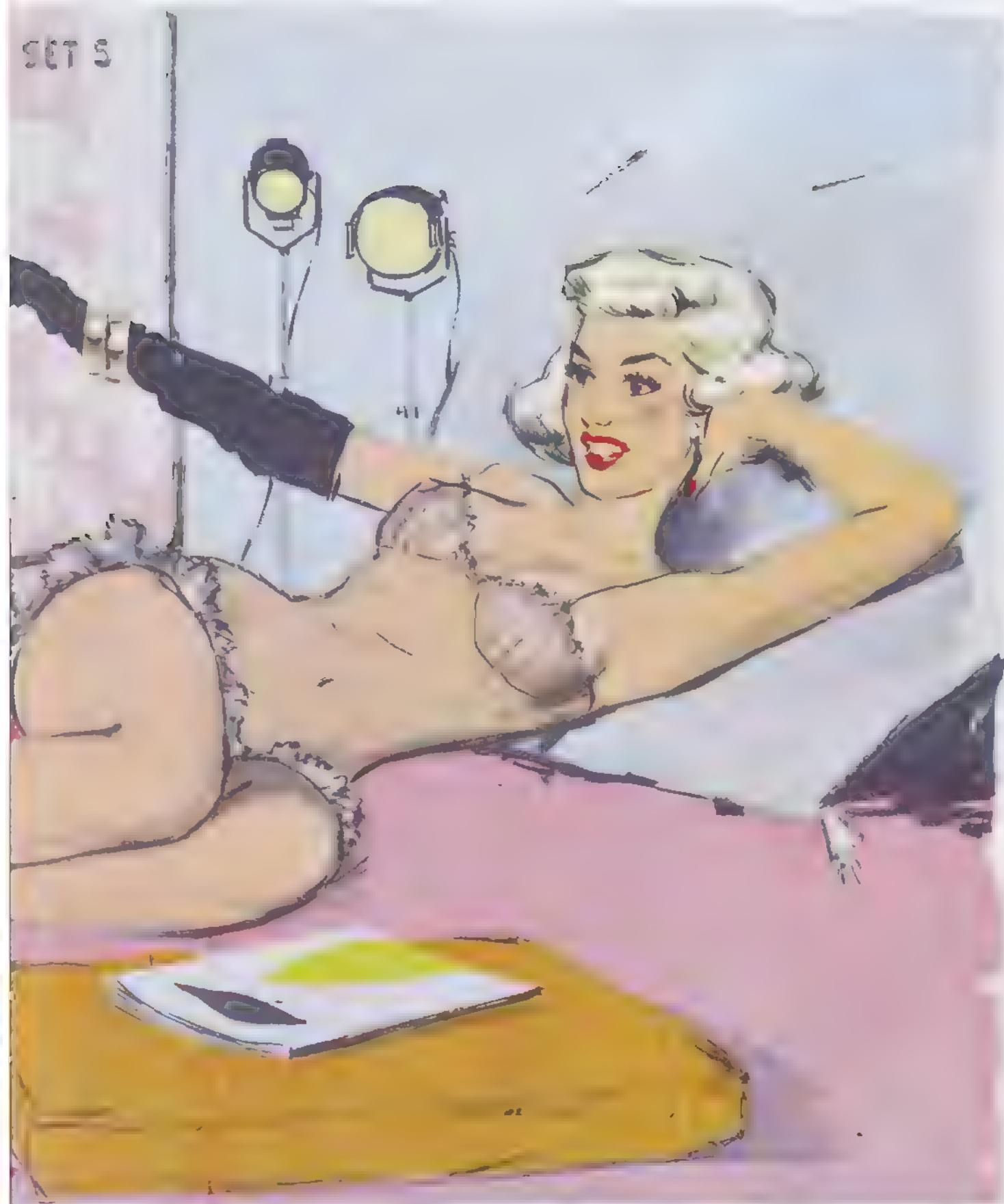
diamond-studded garters and foot-long cigarette holder were in perfect taste. She sat on a chaise lounge, sipping a glass of homogenized milk.

"H'ya," I said, putting every ounce of meaning possible into the expression.

I could see that I'd said the right thing. She got up slowly and undulated toward me with her hips waving a naughty reply. Her negligee slipped from her shoulders and she stood there with her breasts trained on me like twin Colt automatics. Her arms snaked around my waist. She gripped her facile body firmly to mine and nuzzled her mouth to the side of my face. Her sharp, hot tongue darted a message into my ear that Morse never decoded. It said collect. (continued on page 21)



cliffs



"He promised me an important part in the picture, then I ended up on the cutting room floor."

My Gun (cont from page 29)

Tiny needles pricked insistently up and down my body. It was only my British tweeds. Then I remembered that I was Reginald Sledge, Private Orb—tough, imperturbable, and goddamned mean, too!

I stiff-armed her back onto the chaise lounge.

"Look, Sharlene," I said, "I'm Reginald Sledge, Private Orb! I'm here for just one thing—a rotten, dirty, lousy parakeet killer." My lips curled menacingly. I'm a mean bastard. She shot me a demure smile and poured me out a glass of homogenized milk. It was delicious.

"You're a funny boy, Reggie," she said. I could tell I was getting to her.

"Yeah?" I remonstrated.

She kept talking, feverishly. "I've known a lot of mean bastards in my life, but you're the meanest, toughest bastard of them all, and I must have you!"

I surveyed the situation coolly. If she thought I was going to be a push-over, she had another thought coming. Dames are always trying to put the make on me, damn it. I decided to be subtle.

DECAMERON (continued from page 18)

And I, as you see me now, must remain alone and discontented in my bed. Therefore, I have long desired to do what has now been done, and my only reason for waiting was the wish to commit the act in the presence of men who could judge my quarrel justly, as I believe you will."

The gentlemen believed her alleged affection for Nicostratus to be the reason for her action, and so they turned laughing to the angry husband, and said:

"The lady was most right to avenge herself upon the bird." And after the lady had retired to her room, they made so many jokes about it all that they changed Nicostratus' annoyance into laughter. And Pyrrhus said to himself, "The lady has made a noble beginning to our bargain. I pray that she continues as successfully."

A few days after the death of the hawk, Lydia was in her chamber with Nicostratus caressing him and jesting and toying with him. Playfully, he pulled her by the hair, thus giving her an opportunity to carry out Pyrrhus' second request. She quickly grasped a small lock of her husband's beard and laughingly pulled it so hard it came clean out of his chin. This she then sent to her expectant lover.

The third request took more thought, but she was a spirited wench, and love gave her special wits. She hit upon a most ingenious plan. Nicostratus had two young pages, given to him by their father, that they might be raised in a house of good breeding and manners. When Nicostratus sat at the table, one of them carved for him and the other served him drink. Ly-

dia sent for them both and told them that their breaths were offensive, and commanded that henceforth they should turn their heads when they served Nicostratus, and that they should never speak of the matter to anyone. The boys believed her and thereafter behaved as the lady had told them. The lady then said to Nicostratus:

"Have you noticed how the boys act when they are waiting on you?"

"Yes," said Nicostratus, "and I mean to ask them the reason for it."

"Do not so embarrass them," said the lady, "for I can tell you myself. I have kept silent about it for some time for I did not wish to offend you. But now I see that others are beginning to take notice, and so I must speak. It is your breath. It is most offensive, and the boys turn away to avoid it. I cannot understand it, for it is not customary with you. But it is most unfortunate, as you spend your time with gentlemen, and we must find some means of curing it."

"What can it be?" Nicostratus said. "Can one of my teeth have gone rotten?"

"Perhaps that is it," Lydia agreed.

She took him to a window, made him open his mouth, and after looking here and there, she said:

"Oh, Nicostratus, how can you have endured it for so long? You've a tooth there that appears to be quite rotten, through and through. If you keep it any longer, it will surely infect the other teeth around it. I suggest that you have it removed immediately."

"It is strange that I feel nothing."

face, contorting it into a horrible mask of righteousness. I sneaked a glance at my face in the mirror. It even scared hell out of me.

"It was easy, Fats," I sneered. "I was just kidding with that rod routine when I walked in. You gave yourself away just now when you asked how I knew you did it. I was smart enough to catch on immediately. Farewell, you louse!"

I squeezed the trigger of the bazooka triumphantly. A staggering roar shook the room as my atomic warhead seared into his flaccid belly. What had been Fats Lambo a moment before was now a blob of viscous flesh contaminating the floor. I kicked the blubbery remains and loped out the door laughing like a madman. My kind of job has its sunnier moments.

My next stop was the corner drugstore—it just took a moment. I walked out into the street and grabbed a cab. I gave the cabbie the address of Sharlene dePlush and leaned back in happy anticipation.

This time I brought along a bottle of chlorophyll. If Sharlene played her cards right, I might be had after all.



Nicostratus said, "but send for the chirurgeon. I must have it out at once, before it infects my entire mouth."

"Oh, no," cried the lady, "it appears to be in such a shape that I could draw it out myself. We dare not wait for the chirurgeon. Moreover, these doctors are so heartless in performing their services that I could not bear to see you in their hands. I'll do it all myself. Then if it is too painful, I shall stop at once, a thing no doctor ever does."

She then sent for a large pliers and ordered everyone from the room. She made Nicostratus lie upon a table, then placed the pliers in his mouth round one of his teeth and, in spite of his yells, yanked it from him. She hid the good tooth at once and produced another rotten one she had concealed. Showing this to her husband as he lay half dead from pain on the table, she said:

"Look at what rottenness you had in your mouth for so long."

Although Nicostratus had suffered greatly and complained bitterly about it, he believed his wife, and since the tooth was out, was glad that he had been so cured.

The lady immediately sent the tooth to Pyrrhus; and he, now certain of her love, said he was ready to give her every pleasure.

Though every hour apart was now like a thousand, the lady still wished to carry out her last promise. Therefore, one evening immediately after dinner, with no one in the room but Nicostratus (continued on page 48)

PLAYBOY'S

THE model climbed up the ladder,
As Titian, the painter, had
had her.
Till her position, to Titian,
Suggested coition.
So he climbed up the ladder
and had her.

A father was shopping in a department store with his small daughter, when the little girl suddenly pulled on his coat sleeve and said, "Daddy, I gotta go."

"In a few minutes dear," the father replied.

"I gotta go now," the little girl insisted in a very loud voice.

To avoid a scene, a saleslady stepped forward and said, "That's alright, sir, I'll take her."

The saleslady and the little girl hurried off hand in hand. When they returned, the father asked his daughter, "Did you thank the nice lady for being so kind?"

"Why should I thank her?" retorted the little girl, as loud as before, "She had to go too."

THERE was a young lady from France,
Who decided to just "take a chance."
For an hour or so,
She just "let herself go."
And now all her sisters are aunts.

LITTLE Johnny, with a grin,
Drank up all of pappy's gin.
Mother said, when he was plastered,
"Go to bed, you little love-child."



have to do is be charming and let nature take its course."

The system was indeed simple, but it also seemed foolproof. Eddie boarded the 5:21 that night with Pete's instructions fixed firmly in his mind. But he dozed enroute and didn't waken till two stops after Great Neck. He got off the train in a hurry and was about to catch a cab back to his destination when he noticed an unescorted female standing on the platform looking very, very available.

He sauntered over casually, lit her cigarette, and asked whether she'd like to have a nice quiet drink with him.

"I'd love to," she said, "but let's go to my place. It's near here and it's very, very quiet."

Everything went as planned. They had a small dinner at her place, some drinks, then they retired to the pleasures of the bedroom. They'd been enjoying themselves only a few minutes, however, when the door swung open and the lady's husband entered.

"Goddamnit, Betty," he cried, "what the hell goes on here?! So this is what you do when my back is turned! And as for you, you muttonhead—I thought I told you to get off at Great Neck!!"

HEARD tell about the widow who wears black garters in remembrance of those who have passed beyond.

"HOW many beers does it take to make you dizzy?" he asked.

"Four or five," she retorted, "and don't call me dizzy!"



*"George -these aren't the pictures of our trip
to Yellowstone National Park!"*

Copper Beeches (continued from page 24)

made me wish to know a little more before I quite committed myself.

"May I ask where you live, sir?" said I.

"Hampshire. Charming rural place. The Copper Beeches, five miles on the far side of Winchester. It is the most lovely country, my dear young lady, and the dearest old country-house."

"And my duties, sir? I should be glad to know what they would be."

"One child — one dear little romper just six years old. Oh, if you could see him killing cockroaches with a slipperl Smack! smack! smack! Three gone before you could wink!" He leaned back in his chair and laughed his eyes into his head again.

"I was a little startled at the nature of the child's amusement, but the father's laughter made me think that perhaps he was joking.

"My sole duties, then," I asked, "are to take charge of a single child?"

"No, no, not the sole, not the sole, my dear young lady," he cried. "Your duty would be, as I am sure your good sense would suggest, to obey any little commands my wife might give, provided always that they were such commands as a lady might with propriety obey. You see no difficulty, heh?"

"I should be happy to make myself useful."

"Quite so. In dress now, for example. We are faddy people, you know — faddy but kind-hearted. If you were asked to wear any dress which we might give you, you would not object to our little whim. Heh?"

"No," said I, considerably astonished at his words.

"Or to sit here, or sit there, that would not be offensive to you?"

"Oh, no."

"Or to cut your hair quite short before you come to us?"

"I could hardly believe my ears. As you may observe, Mr. Holmes, my hair is somewhat luxuriant, and of a rather peculiar tint of chestnut. It has been considered artistic. I could not dream of sacrificing it in this offhand fashion.

"I am afraid that that is quite impossible," said I. He had been watching me eagerly out of his small eyes, and I could see a shadow pass over his face as I spoke.

"I am afraid that it is quite essential," said he. "It is a little fancy of my wife's, and ladies' fancies, you know, madam, ladies' fancies must be consulted. And so you won't cut your hair?"

"No, sir, I really could not," I answered firmly.

"Ah, very well; then that quite settles the matter. It is a pity, because in other respects you would really have done very nicely. In that case, Miss Stopper, I had best inspect a few more of your young ladies."

The manageress had sat all this while busy with her papers without a word to either of us, but she glanced

at me now with so much annoyance upon her face that I could not help suspecting that she had lost a handsome commission through my refusal.

"Do you desire your name to be kept upon the books?" she asked.

"If you please, Miss Stopper."

"Well, really, it seems rather useless, since you refuse the most excellent offers in this fashion," said she sharply. "You can hardly expect us to exert ourselves to find another such opening for you. Good-day to you, Miss Hunter." She struck a gong upon the table, and I was shown out by the page.

"Well, Mr. Holmes, when I got back to my lodgings and found little enough in the cupboard, and two or three bills upon the table, I began to ask myself whether I had not done a very foolish thing. After all, if these people had strange fads and expected obedience on the most extraordinary matters, they were at least ready to pay for their eccentricity. Very few governesses in England are getting 100 pounds a year. Besides, what use was my hair to me? Many people are improved by wearing it short, and perhaps I should be among the number. Next day I was inclined to think that I had made a mistake, and by the day after I was sure of it. I had almost overcome my pride so far as to go back to the agency and inquire whether the place was still open when I received this letter from the gentleman himself. I have it here, and I will read it to you:

*"The Copper Beeches,
near Winchester*

"DEAR MISS HUNTER:

"Miss Stopper has very kindly given me your address, and I write from here to ask you whether you have reconsidered your decision. My wife is very anxious that you should come, for she has been much attracted by my description of you. We are willing to give 30 pounds a quarter or 120 pounds a year, so as to recompense you for any little inconvenience which our fads may cause you. They are not very exacting, after all. My wife is fond of a particular shade of electric blue, and would like you to wear such a dress indoors in the morning. You need not, however, go to the expense of purchasing one, as we have one belonging to my dear daughter Alice (now in Philadelphia), which would, I should think, fit you very well. Then, as to sitting here or there, or amusing yourself in any manner indicated, that need cause you no inconvenience. As regards your hair, it is no doubt a pity, especially as I could not help remarking its beauty during our short interview, but I am afraid that I must remain firm upon this point, and I only hope that the in-

creased salary may recompense you for the loss. Your duties, as far as the child is concerned, are very light. Now do try to come, and I shall meet you with the dog-cart at Winchester. Let me know your train."

*"Yours faithfully,
"JEPHRO RUCastle."*

"That is the letter which I have just received, Mr. Holmes, and my mind is made up that I will accept it. I thought, however, that before taking the final step I should like to submit the whole matter to your consideration."

"Well, Miss Hunter, if your mind is made up, that settles the question," said Holmes, smiling.

"But you would not advise me to refuse?"

"I confess that it is not the situation which I should like to see a sister of mine apply for."

"What is the meaning of it all, Mr. Holmes?"

"Ah, I have no data. I cannot tell. Perhaps you have yourself formed some opinion?"

"Well, there seems to me to be only one possible solution. Mr. Rucastle seemed to be a very kind, good-natured man. Is it not possible that his wife is a lunatic, that he desires to keep the matter quiet for fear she should be taken to an asylum, and that he humours her fancies in every way in order to prevent an outbreak?"

"That is a possible solution — in fact, as matters stand, it is the most probable one. But in any case it does not seem to be a nice household for a young lady."

"But the money, Mr. Holmes, the money!"

"Well, yes, of course the pay is good — too good. That is what makes me uneasy. Why should they give you 120 pounds a year, when they could have their pick for 40 pounds? There must be some strong reason behind."

"I thought that if I told you the circumstances you would understand afterwards if I wanted your help. I should feel so much stronger if I felt that you were at the back of me."

"Oh, you may carry that feeling away with you. I assure you that your little problem promises to be the most interesting which has come my way for some months. There is something distinctly novel about some of the features. If you should find yourself in doubt or in danger —"

"Danger! What danger do you foresee?"

Holmes shook his head gravely. "It would cease to be a danger if we could define it," said he. "But at any time, day or night, a telegram would bring me down to your help."

"That is enough." She rose briskly from her chair with the anxiety all swept from her face. "I shall go down to Hampshire quite easy in my mind now. I shall write to Mr. Rucastle at once, sacrifice my poor hair to-night, and start for (continued on next page)

Copper Beeches (continued from preceding page)

Winchester to-morrow. With a few grateful words to Holmes she bade us both good night and hustled off upon her way.

"At least," said I as we heard her quick, firm steps descending the stairs, "she seems to be a young lady who is very well able to take care of herself."

"And she would need to be," said Holmes gravely. "I am much mistaken if we do not hear from her before many days are past."

It was not very long before my friend's prediction was fulfilled. A fortnight went by, during which I frequently found my thoughts turning in her direction and wondering what strange side-alley of human experience this lonely woman had strayed into. The unusual salary, the curious conditions, the light duties, all pointed to something abnormal, though whether a fad or a plot, or whether the man were a philanthropist or a villain, it was quite beyond my powers to determine. As to Holmes, I observed that he sat frequently for half an hour on end, with knitted brows and an abstracted air, but he swept the matter away with a wave of his hand when I mentioned it. "Datal datal data!" he cried impatiently. "I can't make bricks without clay." And yet he would always wind up by muttering that no sister of his should ever have accepted such a situation.

The telegram which we eventually received came late one night just as I was thinking of turning in and Holmes was settling down to one of those all night chemical researches which he frequently indulged in, when I would leave him stooping over a retort and a test-tube at night and find him in the same position when I came down to breakfast in the morning. He opened the yellow envelope, and then, glancing at the message, threw it across to me.

"Just look up the trains in Bradshaw," said he, and turned back to his chemical studies.

The summons was a brief and urgent one.

Please be at the Black Swan Hotel at Winchester at midday to-morrow (it said). Do come! I am at my wit's end.

HUNTER.

"Will you come with me?" asked Holmes, glancing up.

"I should wish to."

"Just look it up, then."

"There is a train at half past nine," said I, glancing over my Bradshaw. "It is due at Winchester at 11:30."

"That will do very nicely. Then perhaps I had better postpone my analysis of the acetones, as we may need to be at our best in the morning."

By eleven o'clock the next day we were well upon our way to the old English capital. Holmes had been

buried in the morning papers all the way down, but after we had passed the Hampshire border he threw them down and began to admire the scenery. It was an ideal spring day, a light blue sky, flecked with little fleecy white clouds drifting across from west to east. The sun was shining very brightly, and yet there was an exhilarating nip in the air, which set an edge to a man's energy. All over the countryside, away to the rolling hills around Aldershot, the little red and gray roofs of the farm-steadings peeped out from amid the light green of the new foliage.

"Are they not fresh and beautiful?" I cried with all the enthusiasm of a man fresh from the fogs of Baker Street.

But Holmes shook his head gravely.

"Do you know, Watson," said he, "that it is one of the curses of a mind with a turn like mine that I must look at everything with reference to my own special subject. You look at these scattered houses and you are impressed by their beauty. I look at them, and the only thought which comes to me is a feeling of their isolation and of the impunity with which crime may be committed there."

"Good heavens!" I cried. "Who would associate crime with these dear old homesteads?"

"They always fill me with a certain horror. It is my belief, Watson, founded upon my experience, that the lowest and vilest alleys in London do not present a more dreadful record of sin than does the smiling and beautiful countryside."

"You horrify me!"

"But the reason is very obvious. The pressure of public opinion can do in the town what the law cannot accomplish. There is no lane so vile that the thud of a drunkard's blow, does not beget sympathy and indignation among the neighbours, and then the whole machinery of justice is ever so close that a word of complaint can set it going, and there is but a step between the crime and the dock. But look at these lonely houses, each in its own fields, filled for the most part with poor ignorant folk who know little of the law. Think of the deeds of hellish cruelty, the hidden wickedness which may go on, year in, year out, in such places, and none the wiser. Had this lady who appeals to us for help gone to live in Winchester, I should never have had a fear for her. It is the five miles of country which makes the danger. Still, it is clear that she is not personally threatened."

"No. If she can come to Winchester to meet us she can get away."

"Quite so, she has her freedom."

"What can be the matter, then? Can you suggest no explanation?"

"I have devised seven separate explanations, each of which would cover the facts as far as we know them. But

which of these is correct can only be determined by the fresh information which we shall no doubt find waiting for us. Well, there is the tower of the cathedral, and we shall soon learn all that Miss Hunter has to tell."

The Black Swan is an inn of repute in the High Street, at no distance from the station, and there we found the young lady waiting for us. She had engaged a sitting-room, and our lunch awaited us upon the table.

"I am so delighted that you have come," she said earnestly. "It is so very kind of you both; but indeed I do not know what I should do. Your advice will be altogether invaluable to me."

"Pray tell us what has happened to you."

"I will do so, and I must be quick, for I have promised Mr. Rucastle to be back before three. I got his leave to come into town this morning, though he little knew for what purpose."

"Let us have everything in its due order." Holmes thrust his long thin legs out towards the fire and composed himself to listen.

"In the first place, I may say that I have met, on the whole, with no actual ill treatment from Mr. and Mrs. Rucastle. It is only fair to them to say that. But I cannot understand them, and I am not easy in mind about them."

"What can you not understand?"

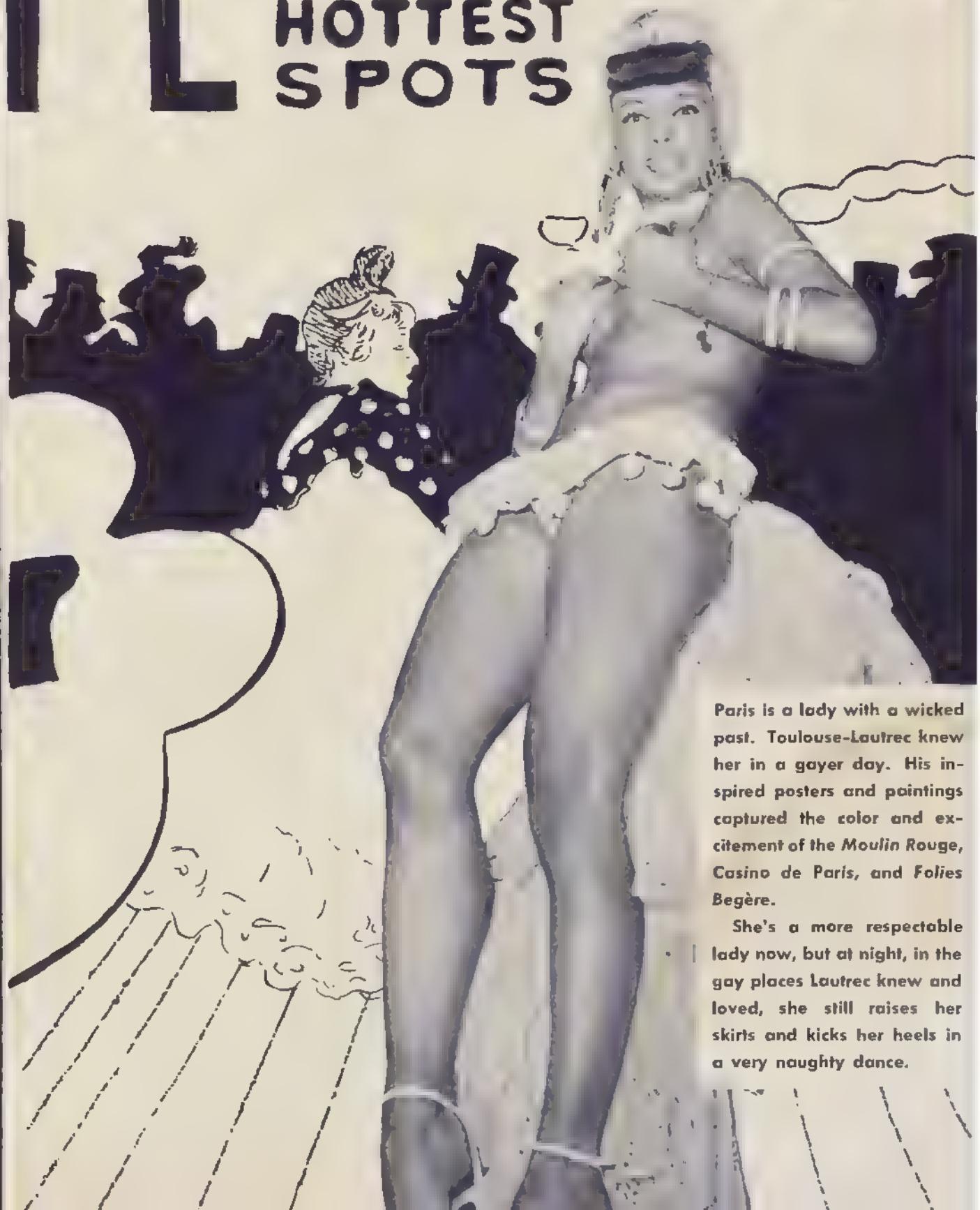
"Their reasons for their conduct. But you shall have it all just as it occurred. When I came down, Mr. Rucastle met me here and drove me in his dog-cart to the Copper Beeches. It is, as he said, beautifully situated, but it is not beautiful in itself, for it is a large square block of a house, whitewashed, but all stained and streaked with damp and bad weather. There are grounds round it, woods on three sides, and on the fourth a field which slopes down to the Southampton highroad, which curves past about a hundred yards from the front door. This ground in front belongs to the house, but the woods all round are part of Lord Southerton's preserves. A clump of copper beeches immediately in front of the hall door has given its name to the place."

"I was driven over by my employer, who was as amiable as ever, and was introduced by him that evening to his wife and the child. There was no truth, Mr. Holmes, in the conjecture which seemed to us to be probable in your rooms at Baker Street. Mrs. Rucastle is not mad. I found her to be a silent, pale-faced woman, much younger than her husband, not more than thirty, I should think, while he can hardly be less than forty-five. From their conversation I have gathered that they have been married about seven years, that he was a widower, and that his only child by the first wife was the daughter who has gone to Philadelphia. (continued on page 45)

PLAYBOY

TOURS THE HOTTEST SPOTS

IN PARIS



Paris is a lady with a wicked past. Toulouse-Lautrec knew her in a gayer day. His inspired posters and paintings captured the color and excitement of the *Moulin Rouge*, *Casino de Paris*, and *Folies Bergère*.

She's a more respectable lady now, but at night, in the gay places Lautrec knew and loved, she still raises her skirts and kicks her heels in a very naughty dance.



THE BOLD PAINTINGS and posters of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec keep alive the after-dark places of Paris in the 1800s. He knew them well. A twisted dwarf of a man, Lautrec lived by night, losing himself in the gaiety of the dance halls, the sensual pleasures of the houses of sin. His art is filled with the entertainers, the prostitutes, and the patrons of these places. Lautrec is most famous for his brilliant lithographs of the *Moulin Rouge* and *Folies Bergère*. The commercial posters of sixty years ago are fine art today.

No camera can hope to capture the spirit of the city as Lautrec's paintings did. These photographs do offer some of the flavor of present-day Paris, however, and serve to contrast the old with the new.

Paris is still a naughty city. Though the houses of prostitution are now legally closed, sex still walks her streets. And if the night spots seem more conservative, there are compensations. The shows are far more imaginative and the girls are displayed in far less than was possible in Lautrec's time. In fact, a strategically placed flower or two is all that is required to appease Paris propriety and the gendarmes.

Nudity is really the biggest feature of the modern Paris night club. Sometimes it's displayed in very fancy feathers — the *Folies Bergère* actually hangs a girl from the ceiling in a giant bird cage; sometimes it's displayed on a tiny stage surrounded by tables, very much like an American show lounge.

A club called *Adam and Eve* headlines an intimate dance with near-nude members of both sexes — strictly taboo in the U.S.

Le Ciel displays undressed angels in surroundings supposed to represent heaven; *Bal Tabarin* offers a rather unbiblical tableau of Eve, the serpent, and the apple (Adam doesn't even rate an appearance in this version).

You can actually have your nakedness in almost any setting: the *El Djazair* is arabian, with belly dancers inviting customers to tuck money into their costumes; *Le Gypsy*, a Left Bank cabaret, offers a gypsy motif; a spot called *The Crazy Horse Saloon* features western music and nude cowgirls.

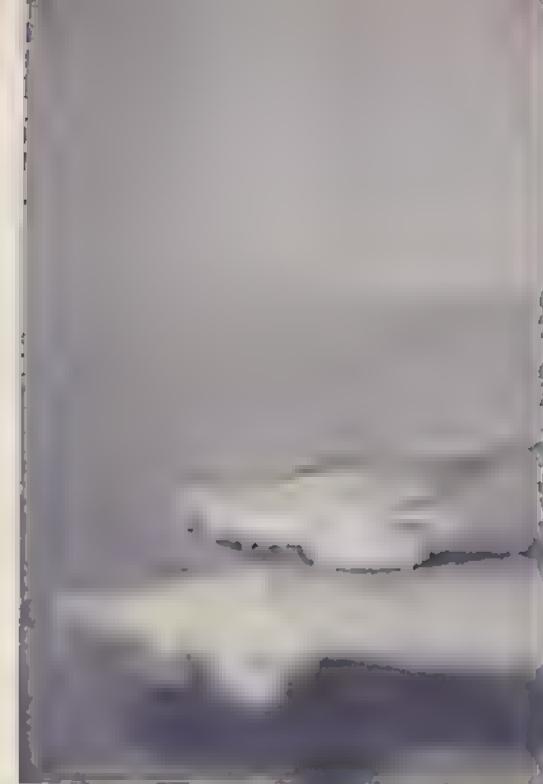
The most famous night club in Paris is still the *Folies Bergère* and here the spectacular staging, the beautiful costumes and imaginative scenery might be expected to overshadow mere nakedness.

But the souvenirs at the *Folies Bergère* are tiny nude dolls and all the spectacular splendor, the props, the lights, the sets, are simply used to make the naked female figure more attractive and exciting. Voluptuous beauties turn into candelabra, brightly plumed birds, trees, and sea nymphs.

The annual production costs for the *Folies* shows run to hundreds of thousands of dollars, but the most popular attraction is a single, dusky skinned beauty named Yvonne Menard, billed simply, and quite correctly, as "The most beautiful nude in Paris."



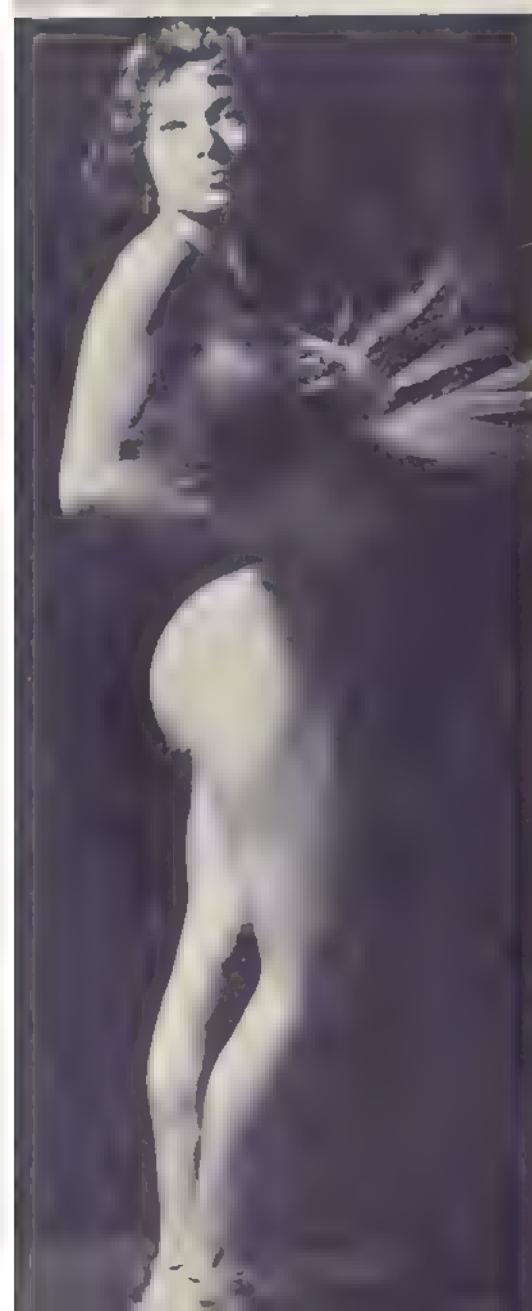




THE *FOLIES BEGÈRE* is as famous today as it was in the time of Toulouse-Lautrec, but it has an attraction now that would put its 1800 girls to shame. Her name is Yvonne Menard and she is really something to see.

Sometimes she appears on stage in a feathered headdress, sometimes an elaborate chandelier effect made of glass, and in one number she wears a full length pair of jodhpurs. But the costume the paying customers like best is in the *Borgia* bath number, where she has nothing on at all — fore or aft — except a tiny, diamond-shaped patch of beads.

It takes more than mere nakedness, though, to explain the terrific hold Yvonne exerts over her audiences. As song writer Georges Tabet puts it, "Yvonne is the crystallization of Paris. She's got a '*petit quelque chose*' — a little 'something' — that you have to be born with. Chevalier, he has it in his smile. Edith Piaf has it in her voice. This one — she has it all over!"



CABIN

(cont. from page 10)

her, and before she realized what was happening, he had taken another step and grabbed her. Jeanie tried to jerk away from him, but her dress was so old and worn she was afraid it would be torn if she tried to struggle with Bony. Bony put both arms around her and tried to kiss her.

"You wouldn't try to do that if Davi was here," Jeanie said.

"Why wouldn't I?" he laughed. "What's he got to do with it now?"

She pulled away from him, holding him off with her elbow stiff, and then she hit him as hard as she could. All he did was laugh at her.

"I like a girl with plenty of fight in her," Bony said.

He caught her with both hands. Her dress tore like a sheet of newspaper. While she struggled to cover herself she realized how much strength was bound up in a man's muscles.

"The more you fight, the more you'll wear yourself out," he told her, laughing at her while she tried to hold the torn dress together. The dress had been torn down her back to her waist, and she could feel the hot sun burning her bare body. "And more than that," Bony said, "when you fight, it just naturally makes your dress rip more and more."

Jeanie stepped closer to Bony. A moment later, she had pushed with all her strength, and he went tumbling backward. The last she saw of him then was when his feet went kicking into the air over his head. He had ruined nearly two whole rows of onions and cabbages.

Running with all her might, and holding her dress behind her, Jeanie reached the safety of the kitchen. She slammed the door shut and pushed the table against it.

Bony walked around the house sev-

eral times like a dog circling a strange animal he was afraid to strike at. He looked in the windows, first at the front and then at the rear, but he did not try to open them. After a while, he sat down on a stump only half a dozen steps from the front door.

"I could get in if I wanted to," he shouted at Jeanie. "I could smash open one of these windows with no trouble at all. That's all I'd have to do to get in, if I wanted to. But I guess I'll wait a while."

Jeanie huddled on the floor beside the bed, shivering and crying.

Some time later, she thought she heard a sound of some kind outside the room. She crept on her hands and knees to the window and looked out through the broken shutter. Bony was walking slowly down the path toward the swamp. He did not look back.

With the strength she had left, she crawled back to the bed and fell across it. She cried until she lost consciousness.

It was completely dark when she woke up. Running to the window, she could see by the sky that the sun had set a long time before. Overhead were dark patches of clouds drifting toward the moon.

By then she was fully awake. She went to the door, and back to the window. She did not know how many times she went back and forth, looking. Each time she crossed the room she felt weaker. Then she fell on the floor sobbing and shivering, too weak to get to her knees.

At last Jeanie opened the door and looked searchingly into the moon-swept yard. There was still no sign of Davi out there. At first she ran in circles about the place, trying to make up her mind what to do. Then she turned down the path and ran with all her might toward the swamp.

A few yards from the edge of the swamp, where the single log path began, she stopped suddenly. Before her

lay the tangled swamp over which Davi had always carried her. She started slowly, testing each step of the footing on the slippery, barkless, chained logs. Before she had gone the length of the first log, she felt herself being lifted off her feet.

She could not turn around, but she could feel the strange arms around her waist, and she knew then that it was Bony who had caught her up. She did not cry out when he lifted her off her feet and carried her back to the solid ground at the end of the log.

Bony put her down, turning her around to look into her face. He was smiling at her in the same way he had looked while sitting on the stump in the garden that afternoon.

"You're up mighty late," he said.

"Where's Davi?" Jeanie cried.

"Davi?" Bony repeated. "I was thinking the same thing myself only a little while ago. To tell the truth exactly, I don't know where he's at."

"You do know, Bony! Where's Davi?"

He held her more tightly, gripping his fingers around her arms.

"I've got an idea, but I wouldn't swear to it," he said. "The reason I wouldn't swear to it is because I didn't see it with my own eyes. It's so dark in here every time a cloud passes under the moon that it's hard to see your own hand in front of you."

"You tell me where Davi is!" Jeanie cried, beating her hands against him.

"I'd say that maybe Davi started across the swamp and tripped up. It was mighty foolish of him to start across the swamp on a cloudy night. I'd be afraid of falling into one of those mire-holes, if it was me."

Jeanie tore herself away from Bony. He ran after her, but she managed to slip out of his grasp, and she ran toward the swamp. Bony lost sight of her completely after half a dozen steps. He could hear the sounds she made, but it was almost impossible to tell the true direction they came from.

"Jeanie!" he shouted. "Jeanie! Come back here, you fool! You can't cross the swamp! Come back here, Jeanie!"

Jeanie did not answer him, and he started treading his way along the first log of the path. He stopped when he found he could not see or feel his way any farther. He listened, and he could not hear anything of Jeanie. In desperation, he got down on his hands and knees and felt his way forward along the slippery logs. Every once in a while he stopped and called to Jeanie, listened for some sound of her, and felt in the mire-holes beside the path.

Towards morning, mud-caked and helpless, Bony reached the firm ground at the end of the path. He sat down to wait for daylight, wondering how long it would take to find some trace of Jeanie, or of Davi.



PLAYBOY'S RING PREVIEW FOR THE YEAR

1954 PROMISES to be a big fight year. Boxing fans can look forward to some exciting ring battles and the IBC can look forward to the exciting ring of cash registers from big gate receipts, TV, movie, and radio revenue.

Rarely have so many champions been so ready, willing and able to put their titles on the line. Heavyweight champ Rocky Marciano, for example, had originally planned on a long lay-off after his decisive win over Roland LaStarza. Now, after touring the Far East, the Brockton Blockbuster is itch-

ing for more action.

Light heavyweight king Archie Moore, back in the states after a series of exhibitions in South America, will defend his title against ex champ Joey Maxim in Miami January 27th. Welt lightweight champion Kid Gavilan is anxious to move into the middleweight ranks for a shot at Carl "Bobo" Olson's newly acquired crown, and Olson seems equally anxious for the match.

With the champions ready to lace on their gloves, the International Box-

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1954



BOXING

(continued from preceding page)

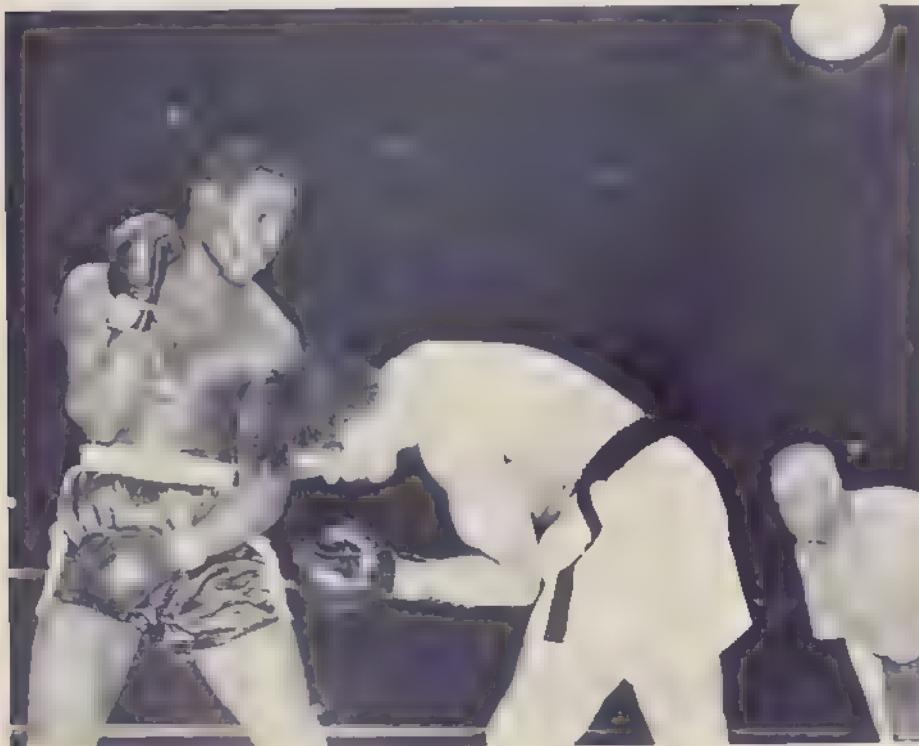


must select suitable opponents from each division. Here are PLAYBOY's listings of the top contenders and predictions of the probable outcomes in each division during the year.

HEAVYWEIGHTS

Rocky Marciano of Brockton, Mass. is the world champion. He won the title from Jersey Joe Walcott in a tremendous thirteen round battle and successfully defended it last year in the much cussed and discussed one-round rematch. His second title defense was a one-sided win over Roland

LaStarza, Jim Slade, Dave Davey, Danny Nardico, Wes Bascom and Tommy Harrison. We'd like to see the IBC stage a Bucceroni-Valdes showdown with the winner getting a crack at Marciano's title. It is extremely doubtful that either one of them will have the pleasure of wearing the heavyweight crown, however. Marciano is an unusually powerful champion, the most impressive since Louis, and the only heavyweight to ever win the title without suffering a single defeat. It is doubtful that anyone in the division will



Two ex-champions are trying comebacks in '54. Ex-heavyweight champ Ezzard Charles (left), after an easy win over Coley Wallace ("Joe Louis" of the movies), wants a shot at Marciano's crown. Ex-light-heavyweight champion Joey Maxim (right) will meet champion Archie Moore in a rematch the end of January.

LaStarza. The leading contenders for his title are:

1. Dan Bucceroni of Philadelphia
2. Nino Valdes of Cuba
3. Ezzard Charles of Cincinnati
4. Roland LaStarza of New York
5. Earl Walls, Edmonton, Canada

Marciano's next title defense should be against 26-year-old Dan Bucceroni. But because of the growing popularity of Nino Valdes, the Cuban heavyweight may draw Marciano first. In his brief but impressive career, Valdes has excited Miami fans with wins over ranking heavyweights Ezzard Charles and Heinz Neuhaus of Germany.

On the basis of experience, however, Bucceroni is the more capable adversary. He wins our number one spot

beat him in the next two or three years. When he finally is beaten, it will probably not be by one of the five now listed as top contenders, but by a younger fighter, now relatively unknown.

LIGHT-HEAVYWEIGHTS

Light heavyweight champion Archie Moore, of San Diego, California, was one of the outstanding fighters in his division. He could have won the title several years ago, if he'd been given a shot at it. Instead, he remained a top contender, while others got the chance to wear the crown. When he finally did manage to swing a championship bout early last year, he was thirty-four years old. He still had enough left to win over Joey Maxim,

but has since proved as reluctant about defending the title as his predecessors.

With the prospect of forfeiting his title if he doesn't defend it, Moore has agreed to a rematch with ex-champ Maxim on January 27th. This should be a dull one with Moore the winner. If top contender Harold Johnson can force the reluctant champion into a bout, however, the title should change hands. Light-heavyweight Johnson has whipped ranking heavyweights Nino Valdes and Ezzard Charles. The leading contenders in the division are:

1. Harold Johnson of Philadelphia, Pa.
2. Danny Nardico of Tampa, Florida
3. Yolande Pompee of Trinidad, B.W.I.
4. Joey Maxim of Cleveland, Ohio
5. Floyd Patterson of Brooklyn

Twenty-year-old Patterson is a real dark horse in the division. A former U.S. Olympic boxing champion, he possesses unusual poise, speed and power. He should develop into a real threat in the division and if he continues to grow, he may reach a heavyweight title showdown with Marciano sometime in '55.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

The title spot vacated by Sugar Ray Robinson has just been won by Carl "Bobo" Olson of Hawaii after a series of elimination bouts climaxed by Olson's unanimous decision over Randy Turpin of England.

The new champ faces a long and impressive list of challengers. Most notable are Rocky Castellani, Joey Giardello, Gil Turner and Joey Giambra. Turner is a beefed up welterweight whose only previous defeat was against Gavilan in a title bout. Still another possibility for Olson is Ernie Durando who recently knocked out France's much heralded Charlie Humez in six rounds in Paris.

But the natural gate-appeal of a bout between middleweight champ Bobo Olson and welterweight champ Kid Gavilan makes this most likely as Olson's first title defense. Gavilan is having weight difficulties as a welter and is anxious to take a shot at the middleweight crown; Olson has indicated he will accept Gavilan for a championship bout. The bolo-throwing Kid was impressive in his last win over Johnny Bratton. He may very well take Bobo and the middleweight prize. Even if he misses, it is doubtful that Olson will be able to hold onto the title very long — the list of contenders is too formidable and Olson isn't any Sugar Ray.

Top contenders for the middleweight crown are:

1. Welterweight champ Kid Gavilan of Cuba
2. Rocky Castellani, Luzerne
3. Joey Giardello of Philadelphia
4. Gil Turner of Philadelphia
5. Joey Giambra of Buffalo, N. Y.

The young... (continued on page 49)

Copper Beeches (continued from page 3b)

Mr. Rucastle told me in private that the reason why she had left them was that she had an unreasoning aversion to her stepmother. As the daughter could not have been less than twenty, I can quite imagine that her position must have been uncomfortable with her father's young wife.

"Mrs. Rucastle seemed to me to be colourless in mind as well as in feature. She impressed me neither favourably nor the reverse. She was a nonentity. It was easy to see that she was passionately devoted both to her husband and to her little son. Her light grey eyes wandered continually from one to the other, noting every little want and forestalling it if possible. He was kind to her also in his bluff, boisterous fashion, and on the whole they seemed to be a happy couple. And yet she had some secret sorrow, this woman. She would often be lost in deep thought, with the saddest look upon her face. More than once I have surprised her in tears. I have thought sometimes that it was the disposition of her child which weighed upon her mind, for I have never met so utterly spoiled and so ill-natured a little creature. He is small for his age, with a head which is quite disproportionately large. His whole life appears to be spent in an alternation between savage fits of passion and gloomy intervals of sulking. Giving pain to any creature weaker than himself seems to be his one idea of amusement, and he shows quite remarkable talent in planning the capture of mice, little birds, and insects. But I would rather not talk about the creature, Mr. Holmes, and, indeed, he has little to do with my story."

"I am glad of all details," remarked my friend, "whether they seem to you to be relevant or not."

"I shall try not to miss anything of importance. The one unpleasant thing about the house, which struck me at once, was the appearance and conduct of the servants. There are only two, a man and his wife. Toller, for that is his name, is a rough, uncouth man, with grizzled hair and whiskers, and a perpetual smell of drink. Twice since I have been with them he has been quite drunk, and yet Mr. Rucastle seemed to take no notice of it. His wife is a very tall and strong woman with a sour face, as silent as Mrs. Rucastle and much less amiable. They are a most unpleasant couple, but fortunately I spend most of my time in the nursery and my own room, which are next to each other in one corner of the building.

"For two days after my arrival at the Copper Beeches my life was very quiet; on the third, Mrs. Rucastle came down just after breakfast and whispered something to her husband.

"'Oh, yes,' said he, turning to me, 'we are very much obliged to you, Miss Hunter, for falling in with our whims so far as to cut your hair. I assure

you that it has not detracted in the tiniest iota from your appearance. We shall now see how the electric blue dress will become you. You will find it laid out upon the bed in your room, and if you would be so good as to put it on we should both be extremely obliged.'

"The dress which I found waiting for me was of a peculiar shade of blue. It was of excellent material, a sort of beige, but it bore unmistakable signs of having been worn before. It could not have been a better fit if I had been measured for it. Both Mr. and Mrs. Rucastle expressed a delight at the look of it, which seemed quite exaggerated in its vehemence. They were waiting for me in the drawing-room, which is a very large room, stretching along the entire front of the house, with three long windows reaching down to the floor. A chair had been placed close to the central window, with its back turned towards it: In this I was asked to sit, and then Mr. Rucastle, walking up and down on the other side of the room, began to tell me a series of the funniest stories that I have ever listened to. You cannot imagine how comical he was, and I laughed until I was quite weary. Mrs. Rucastle, however, who has evidently no sense of humor, never so much as smiled, but sat with her hands in her lap, and a sad, anxious look upon her face. After an hour or so, Mr. Rucastle suddenly remarked that it was time to commence the duties of the day, and that I might change my dress and go to little Edward in the nursery.

"Two days later this same performance was gone through under exactly similar circumstances. Again I changed my dress, again I sat in the window, and again I laughed very heartily at the funny stories of which my employer had an immense repertoire, and which he told inimitably. Then he handed me a yellow-backed novel, and moving my chair a little sideways, that my own shadow might not fall upon the page, he begged me to read aloud to him. I read for about ten minutes, beginning in the heart of a chapter, and then suddenly, in the middle of a sentence, he ordered me to cease and to change my dress.

"You can easily imagine, Mr. Holmes, how curious I became as to what the meaning of this extraordinary performance could possibly be. They were always very careful, I observed, to turn my face away from the window, so that I became consumed with the desire to see what was going on behind my back. At first it seemed to be impossible, but I soon devised a means. My hand-mirror had been broken, so a happy thought seized me, and I concealed a piece of the glass in my handkerchief up to my eyes, and was able with a little management to see all that there was behind me. I confess that I was disappointed. There

was nothing. At least that was my first impression. At the second glance, however, I perceived that there was a man in a gray suit, who seemed to be looking in my direction. The road is an important highway, and there are usually people there. This man, however, was leaning against the railings which bordered our field and was looking earnestly up. I lowered my handkerchief and glanced at Mrs. Rucastle to find her eyes fixed upon me with a most searching gaze. She said nothing, but I am convinced that she had divined that I had a mirror in my hand and had seen what was behind me. She rose at once.

"'Jephro,' said she, 'there is an impudent fellow upon the road there who stares up at Miss Hunter.'

"'No friend of yours, Miss Hunter?' he asked.

"'No, I know no one in these parts.'

"'Dear me! How very impudent! Kindly turn round and motion to him to go away.'

"'Surely it would be better to take no notice.'

"'No, no, we should have him loitering here always. Kindly turn round and wave him away like that.'

"I did as I was told, and at the same instant Mrs. Rucastle drew down the blind. That was a week ago, and from that time I have not sat again in the window, nor have I worn the blue dress, nor seen the man in the road."

"Pray continue," said Holmes. "Your narrative promises to be a most interesting one."

"You will find it rather disconnected, I fear, and there may prove to be little relation between the different incidents of which I speak. On the very first day that I was at the Copper Beeches, Mr. Rucastle took me to a small outhouse which stands near the kitchen door. As we approached it I heard the sharp rattling of a chain, and the sound as of a large animal moving about.

"'Look in here!' said Mr. Rucastle, showing me a slit between two planks. 'Is he not a beauty?'

"I looked through and was conscious of two glowing eyes, and of a vague figure huddled up in the darkness.

"'Don't be frightened,' said my employer, laughing at the start which I had given. 'It's only Carlo, my mastiff. I call him mine, but really old Toller, my groom, is the only man who can do anything with him. We feed him once a day, and not too much then, so that he is always as keen as mustard. Toller lets him loose every night, and God help the trespasser whom he lays his fangs upon. For goodness' sake don't you ever on any pretext set your foot over the threshold at night, for it's as much as your life is worth.'

"The warning was no idle one, for two nights later I happened to look out of my bedroom window about two o'clock in the morning. It was a beautiful moonlight night, and the lawn in front of the house was silvered over and almost as bright as day. I was standing. (continued on next page)

Copper Beeches (continued from preceding page)

tapt in peaceful beauty of the scene, when I was aware that something was moving under the shadow of the copper beeches. As it emerged into the moonshine I saw what it was. It was a giant dog, as large as a calf, tawny tinted, with hanging jowl, black muzzle, and huge projecting bones. It walked slowly across the lawn and vanished into the shadow upon the other side. That dreadful sentinel sent a chill to my heart which I do not think any burglar could have done.

"And now I have a very strange experience to tell you. I had, as you know, cut off my hair in London, and I had placed it in a great coil at the bottom of my trunk. One evening, after the child was in bed, I began to amuse myself by examining the furniture of my room and by rearranging my own little things. There was an old chest of drawers in the room, the two upper ones empty and open, the lower one locked. I had filled the first two with my linen, and as I had still much to pack away I was naturally annoyed at not having the use of the third drawer. It struck me that it might have been fastened by a mere oversight, so I took out my bunch of keys and tried to open it. The very first key fitted to perfection, and I drew the drawer open. There was only one thing in it, but I am sure that you would never guess what it was. It was my coil of hair.

"I took it up and examined it. It was of the same peculiar tint, and the same thickness. But then the impossibility of the thing obtruded itself upon me. How could my hair have been locked in the drawer? With trembling hands I undid my trunk, turned out the contents, and drew from the bottom my own hair. I laid the two treasures together, and I assure you that they were identical. Was it not extraordinary? Puzzle as I would, I could make nothing at all of what it meant. I returned the strange hair to the drawer, and I said nothing of the matter to the Rucastles as I felt I had put myself in the wrong by opening a drawer which they had locked.

"I am naturally observant, as you may have remarked, Mr. Holmes, and I soon had a pretty good plan of the whole house in my head. There was one wing, however, which appeared not to be inhabited at all. A door which faced that which led into the quarters of the Tollers opened into this suite, but it was invariably locked. One day, however, as I ascended the stair, I met Mr. Rucastle coming out through this door, his keys in his hand, and a look on his face which made him a very different person to the round, jovial man to whom I was accustomed. His cheeks were red, his brow was all wrinkled with anger, and the veins stood out at his temples with passion. He locked the door and hurried past me without a word or a look.

"This aroused my curiosity; so when I went out for a walk in the grounds with my charge, I strolled round to the side from which I could see the windows of this part of the house. There were four of them in a row, three of which were simply dirty, while the fourth was shuttered up. They were evidently all deserted. As I strolled up and down, glancing at them occasionally, Mr. Rucastle came out to me, looking as merry and jovial as ever.

"'Ah!' said he, 'you must not think me rude if I passed you without a word, my dear young lady. I was preoccupied with business matters.'

"I assured him that I was not offended. 'By the way,' said I, 'you seem to have quite a suite of spare rooms up there, and one of them has the shutters up.'

"He looked surprised and, as it seemed to me, a little startled at my remark.

"Photography is one of my hobbies," said he. "I have made my dark room up there. But, dear me! what an observant young lady we have come upon. Who would have believed it? Who would have ever believed it?" He spoke in a jesting tone, but there was no jest in his eyes as he looked at me. I read suspicion there and annoyance, but no jest.

"Well, Mr. Holmes, from the moment that I understood that there was something about that suite of rooms which I was not to know, I was all on fire to go over them. It was not mere curiosity, though I have my share of that. It was more a feeling of duty — a feeling that some good might come from my penetrating to this place. They talk of woman's instinct; perhaps it was woman's instinct which gave me that feeling. At any rate, it was there, and I was keenly on the lookout for any chance to pass the forbidden door.

"It was only yesterday that the chance came. I may tell you that, besides Mr. Rucastle, both Toller and his wife find something to do in these deserted rooms, and I once saw him carrying a large black linen bag with him through the door. Recently he has been drinking hard, and yesterday evening he was very drunk; and when I came upstairs there was the key in the door. I have no doubt at all that he had left it there. Mr. and Mrs. Rucastle were both downstairs, and the child was with them, so that I had an admirable opportunity. I turned the key gently in the lock, opened the door, and slipped through.

"There was a little passage in front of me, unpapered and uncarpeted, which turned at a right angle at the farther end. Round this corner were three doors in a line, the first and third of which were open. They each led into an empty room, dusty and cheerless, with two windows in the one

and one in the other, so thick with dirt that the evening light glimmered dimly through them. The centre door was closed, and across the outside of it had been fastened one of the broad bars of an iron bed, padlocked at one end to a ring in the wall, and fastened at the other with stout cord. The door itself was locked as well, and the key was not there. This barricaded door corresponded clearly with the shuttered window outside, and yet I could see by the glimmer from beneath it that the room was not in darkness. Evidently there was a skylight which let in light from above. As I stood in the passage gazing at the sinister door and wondering what secret it might veil, I suddenly heard the sound of steps within the room and saw a shadow pass backward and forward against the little slit of dim light which shone out from under the door. A mad, unreasoning terror rose up in me at the sight, Mr. Holmes. My overstrung nerves failed me suddenly, and I turned and ran — ran as though some dreadful hand were behind me clutching at the skirt of my dress. I rushed down the passage, through the door, and straight into the arms of Mr. Rucastle, who was waiting outside.

"'So,' said he, smiling, 'it was you, then. I thought that it must be when I saw the door open.'

"'Oh, I am so frightened!' I panted.

"'My dear young lady! my dear young lady!' — you cannot think how caressing and soothing his manner was — 'and what has frightened you, my dear young lady?'

"But his voice was just a little too coaxing. He overdid it. I was keenly on my guard against him.

"'I was foolish enough to go into the empty wing,' I answered. 'But it is so lonely and eerie in this dim light I was frightened and ran out again. Oh, it is so dreadfully still in there!'

"'Only that?' said he, looking at me keenly.

"'Why, what did you think?' I asked.

"'Why do you think that I lock this door?'

"'I am sure that I do not know.'

"'It is to keep people out who have no business there. Do you see?' He was still smiling in the most amiable manner.

"'I am sure if I had known —'

"'Well, then, you know now. And if you ever put your foot over that threshold again' — here in an instant the smile hardened into a grin of rage, and he glared down at me with the face of a demon — 'I'll throw you to the mastiff.'

"I was so terrified that I do not know what I did. I suppose that I must have rushed past him into my room. I remember nothing until I found myself lying on my bed trembling all over. Then I thought of you, Mr. Holmes. I could not live there longer without (continued on page 49)



"Darling! — We were just talking about you."



"What the hell do you mean, I offend?"

• • • • DECAMERON (continued from page 32) • • • • •

and Pyrrhus, the lady pretended to become quite ill and begged them each to help her into the fresh air of the garden. This they did, and set her down at the foot of a fine pear tree.

She had already informed Pyrrhus of her plan, and so, when, in a little while, she requested a pear, he quickly climbed the tree and began plucking the fruit. Then suddenly, much agitated, he said:

"My lord, what are you doing? And you, my lady, are you not ashamed to allow it in my presence? Do you think I am blind? A moment ago you were ill; how can you be cured so quickly as to do such things? And if you must do them, you have plenty of bedrooms — why not go there, instead of committing them in my presence."

The lady turned to her husband and said, "What is faithful Pyrrhus talking about? Is he raving?"

"I'm not raving, my lady," Pyrrhus insisted. "Do you think I cannot see?"

Nicostratus was amazed, and said, "Why, Pyrrhus, I think you must be dreaming."

"Nay, sire, I speak the truth!" Pyrrhus continued. "If this pear tree were moving as you, not a pear would be left on it."

"Whatever can this be," exclaimed the lady. "Can it truly be that what he says seems true to him? Oh, I wish that I were well that I might climb the tree and see this marvel for myself."

"Come down from there," Nicostratus commanded. And when Pyrrhus descended, Nicostratus asked, "What is it you believe you saw?"

"You must think my mind is wandering," said Pyrrhus, "but I saw you lying on your lady, and had to tell you so. And as I came down the tree, I saw you rise and sit down where you are now."

"You certainly were out of your mind," said Nicostratus, "for we haven't moved from this spot since you first climbed the tree."

"But I saw you," Pyrrhus insisted, "as clearly as I see you now."

"This pear tree must be bewitched," said Nicostratus. "I must climb it and

see what wonder you behold."

And so he climbed the tree. And as soon as he was in its branches, Pyrrhus and the lady began making love. Seeing them, Nicostratus shouted:

"Vile woman! What are you doing? And you, too, Pyrrhus, in whom I had such trust!"

"But, my lord," said Lydia, "we are sitting still!"

As Nicostratus climbed down, they returned to the places where they had been sitting. Once on the ground, Nicostratus found them in the positions in which he had left them. He immediately began denouncing them both, but Pyrrhus said:

"Nicostratus, I confess, you were right when you said I saw wrongly in the pear tree. I know now, for you, too, have just seen a thing that did not exist. No further proof is needed than to point out that if your lady, who is most chaste and wise, desired to betray your honor, she would certainly never do so before your very eyes. The error of this vision must, therefore, come from the pear tree. For the whole world could not have convinced me that you were not intimately lying with your wife here a few moments ago, if I had not heard you say that you believed me guilty of the very same act just now — when, of course, I was but sitting here watching you in the tree."

The lady rose to her feet, as though in anger, and said:

"Fool husband, if I were ever to do such a thing as you suggest, I would certainly choose a more appropriate time and place. You must be crazed if you believe I would commit such an act in your presence."

Nicostratus had to agree to this logic, and could only marvel at the miracle of the vision in the tree. But the lady continued to feign anger.

"This pear tree will never shame another lady as it has me," she exclaimed. "Pyrrhus, go get an ax and avenge me at once by cutting it down. Though, truthfully, you might better hit my husband on the head with the ax for having allowed his eyes to so fool his intellect. For no matter how your eyes might try to make you believe such a thing, your good judgement ought to tell you it is false."

Pyrrhus immediately went for an ax and cut down the pear tree. And when the lady saw it fall, she said to Nicostratus:

"Now that I have witnessed the fall of my honor's enemy, my anger has departed."

So the lady forgave her husband and commanded him never to make such incredible accusations again. Then the three of them returned together to the house. And with the last of the agreement completed, Pyrrhus and Lydia took intimate pleasure together often and at their leisure. A just reward for so clever a pair.



Copper Beeches (continued from page 46)

some advice. I was frightened of the house, of the man, of the woman, of the servants, even of the child. They were all horrible to me. If I could only bring you down all would be well. Of course I might have fled from the house, but my curiosity was almost as strong as my fears. My mind was soon made up. I would send you a wire. I put on my hat and cloak, went down to the office, which is about half a mile from the house, and then returned, feeling very much easier. A horrible doubt came into my mind as I approached the door lest the dog might be loose, but I remembered that Toller had drunk himself into a state of insensibility that evening, and I knew that he was the only one in the household who had any influence with the savage creature, or who would venture to set him free. I slipped in safely and lay awake half the night in my joy at the thought of seeing you. I had no difficulty in getting leave to come into Winchester this morning, but I must be back before three o'clock, for Mr. and Mrs. Rucastle are going on a visit, and will be away all the evening, so that I must look after the child. Now I have told you all my adventures, Mr. Holmes, and I should be very glad if you could tell me what it all means, and, above all, what I should do."

Holmes and I had listened spell-bound to this extraordinary story. My friend rose now and paced up and down the room, his hands in his pockets, and an expression of the most profound gravity upon his face.

"Is Toller still drunk?" he asked.

"Yes. I heard his wife tell Mrs. Rucastle that she could do nothing with him."

"That is well. And the Rucastles go

out to-night?"

"Yes."

"Is there a cellar with a good strong lock?"

"Yes, the wine-cellar."

"You seem to me to have acted all through this matter like a very brave and sensible girl, Miss Hunter. Do you think that you could perform one morefeat? I should not ask it of you if I did not think you a quite exceptional woman."

"I will try. What is it?"

"We shall be at the Copper Beeches by seven o'clock, my friend and I. The Rucastles will be gone by that time, and Toller will, we hope, be incapable. There only remains Mrs. Toller, who might give the alarm. If you could send her into the cellar on some errand, and then turn the key upon her, you would facilitate matters immensely."

"I will do it."

"Excellent! We shall then look thoroughly into the affair. Of course there is only one feasible explanation. You have been brought there to impersonate someone, and the real person is imprisoned in this chamber. That is obvious. As to who this prisoner is, I have no doubt that it is the daughter, Miss Alice Rucastle, if I remember right, who was said to have gone to America. You were chosen, doubtless, as resembling her in height, figure, and the colour of your hair. Hers had been cut off, very possibly in some illness through which she has passed, and so, of course, yours had to be sacrificed also. By a curious chance you came upon her tresses. The man in the road was undoubtedly some friend of hers — possibly her fiancé — and no doubt, as you wore the girl's dress and were so like her, he was convinced

from your laughter, whenever he saw you, and afterwards from your gesture, that Miss Rucastle was perfectly happy, and that she no longer desired his attentions. The dog is let loose at night to prevent him from endeavouring to communicate with her. So much is fairly clear. The most serious point in the case is the disposition of the child."

"What on earth has that to do with it?" I ejaculated.

"My dear Watson, you as a medical man are continually gaining light as to the tendencies of a child by the study of the parents. Don't you see that the converse is equally valid. I have frequently gained my first real insight into the character of parents by studying their children. This child's disposition is abnormally cruel, merely for cruelty's sake, and whether he derives this from his smiling father, as I should suspect, or from his mother, it bodes evil for the poor girl who is in their power."

"I am sure that you are right, Mr. Holmes," cried our client. "A thousand things come back to me which make me certain that you have hit it. Oh, let us lose not an instant in bringing help to this poor creature."

"We must be circumspect, for we are dealing with a very cunning man. We can do nothing until seven o'clock. At that hour we shall be with you, and it will not be long before we solve the mystery."

We were as good as our word, for it was just seven when we reached the Copper Beeches, having put up our trap at a wayside public-house. The group of trees, with their dark leaves shining like burnished metal in the light of the setting sun, were sufficient to mark the house even had Miss Hunter not been standing smiling on the door-step. (continued on next page)

BOXING (continued from page 44)

est, most promising "middies" being groomed for title shots are Joey Giambra and Willie Troy. Crew-clipped, 22-year-old Giambra is credited with wins over ranking Joey Giardello and Danny "Bang Bang" Womber, winner of a 10 round non-title bout with Kid Gavilan last year. Troy captured national attention with an impressive TKO over flashy Bobby Boyd and a knockout over ranking Randy Sandy.

Billy Graham is still listed as a welterweight, but his impressive win over middleweight Paddy Young makes him an important contender in both divisions.

From any angle, Bobo Olson has a rough year ahead in '54.

WELTERWEIGHTS

Champion Kid Gavilan of Cuba rules the welterweights. If he can beat middleweight champ Olson, he will forfeit the welterweight crown and

the division will be up for grabs. The leading contenders are:

1. Carmen Basilio, Syracuse, N. Y.
2. Johnny Saxton of New York
3. Johnny Bratton of Chicago
4. Billy Graham, New York, N. Y.
5. Ramon Fuentes of Los Angeles

If Gavilan loses to Olson, the welter-weight picture will remain unchanged. Basilio will press for another title shot, but none of the contenders has much chance of taking the title away from the Kid, unless the problem of making the weight proves too much for him.

LIGHTWEIGHTS

Lightweight champ Jimmy Carter of New York is credited with being the busiest champion in boxing. In his most recent title defense, he stopped Canada's pride, Armand Savoie, in Montreal. The leading contenders are:

1. Wallace Smith of Cincinnati

2. Orlando Zulueta of Cuba
3. Eddie Chavez of San Jose, Calif.
4. Ralph Dupas of New Orleans
5. Johnny Gonsalves of Oakland, California.

Seventeen-year-old Ralph Dupas will be a real threat to the champ soon, though he is still probably about a year away. He scored a sensational upset recently in defeating Armand Savoie.

Featherweight champion Sandy Saddler is now serving in the U.S. Army and until his discharge the division will be ruled by Willie Pep, Teddy Davis and Percy Bassett.

Jimmy Carruthers will reign over the bantamweights and Yoshio Shirai will rule the flyweights through 1954 for lack of any real competition.

Division by division it promises to be an active, exciting year.



Copper Beeches (*continued from preceding page*)

"Have you managed it?" asked Holmes.

A loud thudding noise came from somewhere downstairs. "That is Mrs. Toller in the cellar," said she. "Her husband lies snoring on the kitchen rug. Here are his keys, which are the duplicates of Mr. Rucastle's."

"You have done well indeed!" cried Holmes with enthusiasm. "Now lead the way, and we shall soon see the end of this black business."

We passed up the stair, unlocked the door, followed on down a passage, and found ourselves in front of the barricade which Miss Hunter had described. Holmes cut the cord and removed the transverse bar. Then he tried the various keys in the lock, but without success. No sound came from within, and at the silence Holmes's face clouded over.

"I trust that we are not too late," said he. "I think, Miss Hunter, that we had better go in without you. Now, Watson, put your shoulder to it, and we shall see whether we cannot make our way in."

It was an old rickety door and gave at once before our united strength. Together we rushed into the room. It was empty. There was no furniture save a little pallet bed, a small table, and a basketfull of linen. The skylight above was open, and the prisoner gone.

"There has been some villainy here," said Holmes; "this beauty has guessed Miss Hunter's intentions and has carried his victim off."

"But how?"

"Through the skylight. We shall soon see how he managed it." He swung himself up onto the roof. "Ah, yes," he cried, "here's the end of a long light ladder against the eaves. That is how he did it."

"But it is impossible," said Miss Hunter; "the ladder was not there when the Rucastes went away."

"He has come back and done it. I tell you that he is a clever and dangerous man. I should not be very much surprised if this were he whose step I hear now upon the stair. I think, Watson, that it would be as well for you to have your pistol ready."

The words were hardly out of his mouth before a man appeared at the door of the room, a very fat and burly man, with a heavy stick in his hand. Miss Hunter screamed and shrunk against the wall at the sight of him, but Sherlock Holmes sprang forward and confronted him.

"You villain!" said he, "where's your daughter?"

The fat man cast his eyes round, and then up at the open skylight.

"It is for me to ask you that," he shrieked, "you thieves! Spies and thieves! I have caught you, have I? You are in my power. I'll serve you!" He turned and clattered down the

stairs as hard as he could go.

"He's gone for the dog!" cried Miss Hunter.

"I have my revolver," said I.

"Better close the front door," cried Holmes, and we all rushed down the stairs together. We had hardly reached the hall when we heard the baying of a hound, and then a scream of agony, with a horrible worrying sound which it was dreadful to listen to. An elderly man with a red face and shaking limbs came staggering out at a side door.

"My God!" he cried. "Someone has loosed the dog. It's not been fed for two days. Quick, quick, or it'll be too late!"

Holmes and I rushed out and round the angle of the house, with Toller hurrying behind us. There was the huge famished brute, its black muzzle buried in Rucastle's throat, while he writhed and screamed upon the ground. Running up, I blew its brains out, and it fell over with its keen white teeth still meeting in the great creases of his neck. With much labour we separated them and carried him, living but horribly mangled, into the house. We laid him upon the drawing-room sofa, and having dispatched the sobered Toller to bear the news to his wife, I did what I could to relieve his pain. We were all assembled round him when the door opened, and a tall, gaunt woman entered the room.

"Mrs. Toller!" cried Miss Hunter.

"Yes, miss. Mr. Rucastle let me out when he came back before he went up to you. Ah, miss, it is a pity you didn't let me know what you were planning, for I would have told you that your pains were wasted."

"Hal" said Holmes, looking keenly at her. "It is clear that Mrs. Toller knows more about this matter than anyone else."

"Yes, sir, I do, and I am ready enough to tell what I know."

"Then, pray, sit down, and let us hear it, for there are several points on which I must confess that I am still in the dark."

"I will soon make it clear to you," said she; "and I'd have done so before now if I could ha' got out from the cellar. If there's police-court business over this, you'll remember that I was the one that stood your friend and that I was Miss Alice's friend too."

"She was never happy at home, Miss Alice wasn't, from the time that her father married again. She was slighted like and had no say in anything, but it never really became bad for her until after she met Mr. Fowler at a friend's house. As well as I could learn, Miss Alice had rights of her own by will, but she was so quiet and patient, she was, that she never said a word about them, but just left everything in Mr. Rucastle's hands. He knew he was safe with her; but when

there was a chance of a husband coming forward, who would ask for all that the law would give him, then her father thought it time to put a stop on it. He wanted her to sign a paper, so that whether she married or not, he could use her money. When she wouldn't do it, he kept on worrying her until she got brain-fever, and for six weeks was at death's door. Then she got better at last, all worn to a shadow, and with her beautiful hair cut off; but that didn't make no change in her young man, and he stuck to her as true as a man could be."

"Ah," said Holmes, "I think that what you have been good enough to tell us makes the matter fairly clear; and that I can deduce all that remains. Mr. Rucastle then, I presume, took to this system of imprisonment?"

"Yes, sir."

"And brought Miss Hunter down from London in order to get rid of the disagreeable persistence of Mr. Fowler."

"That was it, sir."

"But Mr. Fowler being a persevering man, as a good seaman should be, blockaded the house, and having met you succeeded by certain arguments, metallic or otherwise, in convincing you that your interests were the same as his."

"Mr. Fowler was a very kind-spoken, free-handed gentleman," said Mrs. Toller serenely.

"And in this way he managed that your good man should have no want of drink, and that a ladder should be ready at the moment when your master had gone out."

"You have it, sir, just as it happened."

"I am sure we owe you an apology, Mrs. Toller," said Holmes, "for you have certainly cleared up everything which puzzled us. And here comes the country surgeon and Mrs. Rucastle, so I think, Watson, that we had best escort Miss Hunter back to Winchester, as it seems that our *locus standi* now is rather a questionable one."

And thus was solved the mystery of the sinister house with the copper beeches in front of the door. Mr. Rucastle survived, but was always a broken man, kept alive solely through the care of his devoted wife. They still live with their old servants, who probably know so much of Rucastle's past life that he finds it difficult to part from them. Mr. Fowler and Miss Rucastle were married, by special license, in Southampton the day after their flight, and he is now the holder of a government appointment in the island of Mauritius. As to Miss Violet Hunter, my friend Holmes, rather to my disappointment, manifested no further interest in her when once she had ceased to be the centre of one of his problems, and she is now the head of a private school at Walsall, where I believe that she has met with considerable success.





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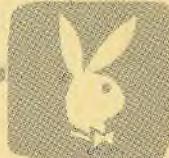
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